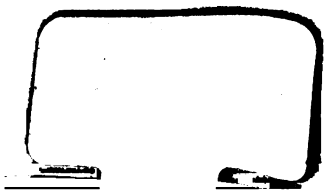


THE

WASSAIL-BOWL.

VOL. I.

The Laudanum Patient.

London, Richard Bentley, 1843.

THE

WASSAIL-BOWL.

BY

ALBERT SMITH.

Author. Who now can taste a treatise of deep sense
And ponderous volume? 'Tis impertinence
To write what none will read; therefore will I
To please the young and thoughtless people try.

Shelley's Scenes from Faust.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1843.

PREFACE.

SOME of these Sketches have already appeared before the Public; others are now added for the first time; but in the majority of them we have aspired no higher than to draw our characters, in the most superficial manner, from every-day scenes. We are better pleased to skim the sunny surface of the stream, amidst the lotus flowers and golden-winged insects, than to dive to its earthy bed, and find nothing but mud and broken crockery in their stead. Our only wish is to produce a few rays of honest merriment round the warm hearth of "olde Christemasse;" and in this attempt we hope, through your courtesy, to succeed. Moreover, we beg to apply to our Wassail-Bowl the words of the showman, when he ushers his audience from the caravan:—

"As you like it, so we hope you 'll recommend it."

14, PERCY-STREET, BEDFORD-SQUARE,
December, 1842.

THE PROLOGUE.

Our Wassell we doe fille
With apples and with spyce,
Then grant us your gode wille
To taste here once or twice
Of our Wassell.

Much joie betide you all,
Our praiers shall be stille,
We hope and ever shal
For this your great gode wille
To our Wassell.

Antient Ballad.

THE

WASSAIL-BOWL.

CHRISTMAS PANTOMIMES.

"The delights—the ten thousand million delights of a pantomime, come streaming upon us now."

DICKENS'S *Life of Grimaldi.*

HUZZA! for Christmas: the hobbling old year has nearly limped away, and with it, we hope, all of grief or sadness that has occurred to dim its progress; the time has arrived again when all that remains of harmless misrule and revelry in merrie England is about to revive from its long twelvemonth's trance, and once more kindle our hearts to enter into the honest mirth and hospitality of our forefathers, before they became too expensive in their pleasures, and too knowing for such simple merriment.

True it is, that the ancient glories of Christmas have faded around our hearths since the blaze of the yule-log threw its cheerful light over the bright armour and quaint mouldings, the rollicking guests and antique

furniture, of the old family-hall. The din of the mummers, and the potent spirits of the wassail-bowl, no longer contribute to our revelry; the sickly melancholy of the modern drawing-room ballad has supplanted the homely Anglo-Norman carol; but, still, Christmas has returned, and with it such fun and joyousness as refinement now allows us to partake of.

At the head of all its gaieties, at least in our still childish opinion, stands the Pantomime. We really anticipate it for months before, and when, at last, the name is announced in the bills, our expectation has arrived at a pitch that is actually intolerable. Come with us to the theatre, dear reader, and take your place beside us. But you must go to the pit if you are our companion, for we mean, in all good truth, to enjoy ourselves and scream with laughter. Besides, we have never seen a pantomime from any other part of the house since we were very little, and we wish to enter as much as possible into old Christmas feelings and associations, and forget all of sorrow that has crossed our path since we first saw the huge curtain rise upon its wonders. How full the house is! The first long piece has just finished, and everybody said simultaneously, as it concluded, "Now for the pantomime!" We are in an excellent humour with ourselves and everybody around us. We do not grumble, as usual, at the persevering apple-women, when they push by our legs between the rows, selling tenpenny books for a shilling; nor do we complain surlily of being too crowded: on the contrary, we are anxious that all should see the forthcoming spectacle, and

enter into its fun as joyfully as ourselves. What a beautiful sight, too, is the multitude of children in the front rows! Look at that pretty rogue in the third box from the lamps; he has been asleep all through the tragedy, notwithstanding he was put to bed for three hours in the middle of the day; but now he is awake again, and is drumming his little fat hands on the red cushions of the box in a perfect agony of anticipation. Then those nice little girls near him, who are so angry with their brother, because he has just discovered a schoolfellow in the pit, and is wriggling about into all those odd telegraphic contortions that only little boys can perform when they wish to communicate at a distance.

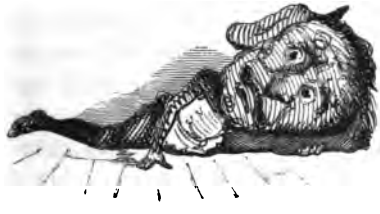
Nor are we unoccupied in the pit. The majority of our companions are standing up to gaze at the

boxes; and those two young men near us are alternately looking through one opera-glass at "that fine girl in pink under the sixth chandelier from the stage," and thinking "it must be Miss Herbert, only she wears her hair differently." The party who remain seated before us are passing round a little pocket-bottle of brandy-and-water to their friends. Watch the rough politeness with which the owner requests the gentleman by his side to "ask his good lady to take some," and the lady's pretty coquetry of refusal in accepting. "Do, ma'am, it 'll do you good," says our friend, as he wipes the mouth of the bottle with his cuff; and then, with a *little* more pressing, the lady puts it to her lips and "just tastes it;" and then she blushes and laughs, and they all join in together, and the fat man in the brown coat winks his eye, and says it 's "only toast and water."

But see! the orchestra is again filling: there is a great shuffling about of music-books, and the most eccentric running up and down of octaves you ever heard, as if all the different instruments were having a piece of fun to themselves. The leader has taken his seat—he looks right and left at the musicians, and then, tapping on his music-desk, the overture commences. It begins with a very long rumble, intending to express mystery, and bearing some resemblance to a wheelbarrow on the Margate jetty, set to music. It proceeds—they get excited—the sounds increase, and then wind up to one grand crash, previous to the introduction of the popular airs of the day. How the little heads in the boxes begin to nod the melody—how

happy they are to hear the very tunes "that sister Ellen plays at home!" They would *encore* them all if the pantomime were not coming after; but, as it is, they applaud them with all the strength they can throw into their tiny hands; when the overture winds up with the concluding chords.

"Down! down in front!" "Have the goodness, sir, to remove your hat!" Now for it in earnest. There is a little more solemn music, all in the minor key; the prompter gives three knocks at his little pigeon-house door in the proscenium, and the curtain rises on the "Dungeons of Gloom in the kingdom of Discontent." Fearful imps, with enormous heads, are wandering about the stage; and two, with cats' faces, are blowing a fire that quite looks red-hot. We do not know what they say — we never hear, and, if we did, we should not understand; but they appear to be expecting some one, from the watchfulness with which they lay their great ears upon the ground.



Then the stage opens, and some red fire is lighted; the "Ore King of the Centre of the Earth" comes up the trap in his car, with two more demons at his feet. We are not to wonder where he is supposed

to come from, or why he comes at all: the moment you criticise a pantomime, its interest is gone. It suffices to presume that he has some urgent business on hand, and that the imps whom he intrusts with his commission are called Blue-blaze, Flicker-flame, Algaroth, Star-twinkle, and Night-shade; and that, moreover, they are all bent upon the same errand to the same place, and so all fly off different ways.

Ten to one but the next scene is a castle. The music now changes to a quaint hopping measure, and an old porter waddles on, with such a head! his body and legs look quite diminutive under it. Then a young lady appears at a window, throwing herself into all sorts of beautiful attitudes, and you see such a dreadful old woman pull her back again: and then, to keep her secluded, she, of course, brings her out of the door in front of the castle. Presently, a young knight enters, in brilliant armour, followed by his squire, with another large head. The young lady flies to the young knight; the old woman pulls her back again; the squire hits the "proud old porter" a tremendous thump on his chest with an enormous key, that knocks him through his own door; and the knight and the young lady are going to fly away, when a gong beats, the walls of the castle sink, the side-scenes change, and you behold "the Dripping Fountain of the Enchanted Well," all silver leaf and blue fire. Here a little more action takes place, and the demons of the first scene are about to carry off the young lady, when the fountain opens, and a fairy comes out, tolerably dry, considering that she has just walked out

of the water. You now see the knight, the lady, the nurse, and the squire, all sidling up towards the wings, with their hands behind their backs. The fairy speaks —their clothes become wrinkled and loose; and, as she pronounces their respective names, the real pantomimists burst upon our delighted gaze.

Hurrah! there 's the Clown! What a roar of laughter runs through the house as he crows, and throws a somerset, and greets us with his old familiar

—"Here we are again! how are you?" And then, what a face he makes! and how he walks upon his calves! The Pantaloon doddles up, and of course tumbles over him; then they take Harlequin between them, and turn him over, which feat ends in their both being knocked down together by his wand; then they run after Columbine, and go hands four round very fast; then all slide up to the lamps, and back again; and finally they make a hoop of themselves, and roll off at the side-scenes.

"Oh! see what I've found!"

The business of the pantomime now commences in earnest; but it is so rapid and laughter-provoking that we can scarcely follow it. There are some few things, however, we always expect. Of course, amongst the scenes, there will be a lodging-house, where the Clown will knock at the door, and then lie down on the steps for everybody to tumble over; of course, he will steal some beer, and attempt to pour it into his pocket, and then pretend to scoop it up with his hand as it runs down his legs; of course, there will be a coach-office, and linendraper's shop; and all the characters will have

such names as Linendraper, Mr. Poplin; Constable, Mr. Take'em-up; Sweep, Master Chummy, (whom, of course, the Clown puts into a milk-pail,) and the like: and the last scene is sure to be "the Hall of Dazzling Mirrors, in the Palace of Revolving Light," where all the pantomimists stand on their heads, and blue, red, and green fires are burnt alternately at the wings.

The curtain falls, and the spell is broken. The audience have been rapidly leaving for the last five minutes; the men appear who envelope the rich mouldings and pillars of the boxes with canvass-wrappers; and we betake ourselves, if it meets your pleasure, to one of the comfortable taverns in the neighbourhood, to enjoy a Welsh rabbit and a pint of stout.

THE WAR WITH CHINA:

(OUR OWN NOTIONS OF IT.)

WE are not about to enter into a political controversy. We leave that exciting task to the wrangling editors of newspapers, the writers of stitched pamphlets without covers, and the race of quarrelsome gentlemen who squabble after dinner during that very bearish time which custom has appropriated to such verbal engagements, when Tours' plums, dogs and horses, Lord Melbourne, *Mirabelles de Metz*, the Duke of Wellington, sponge-cake, cut-glass and claret, are presumed to be proper and equivalent substitutes for the presence

of the fairer portion of the creation. We are not going to bring forward any statistics of tea, rhubarb,

and opium; neither can we give the reader any information upon the state of the workhouses, or names of the boards of guardians in various parishes pertaining to the Canton, Macao, or Chusan unions: but we do not see why we should not say *our* few words upon the Chinese Question, which seems so troublesome to answer, the more so as we are an ardent admirer of the refreshing beverage; in addition, adore little feet and ivory carvings, and especially lean to the old blue-pattern plates and dishes.

Talking of that same old blue pattern, we believe it is but lately that anything has been discovered authentically connected with its origin. It appears, from the information of an ancient document, found in the great library of Long Man, an eminent Chinese bibliopolist, that the original design appeared in an early edition of the Pekin Picturesque Porcelain Annual, where it was inserted by the great artist Fin Den, who dedicated the plate to the Mandarin Twing, whose palace without the city walls it was intended to describe; and who, it was moreover hoped, would pay all expenses incidental to the bringing out of the plate, in consideration of the honour pertaining to the dedication. The Mandarin, however, did not take the hint; and, when the Annual went into other hands, the original design was purchased by a great crockery founder, who reproduced the view in a plate of different construction. Twing, incensed that any one who did not wear red shoes, or whose nails were not more than an inch in length, should even look upon a representation of his summer retreat, obtained an

injunction to restrain the production of any more pieces. The remaining few were rapidly bought up, and kept in secret cabinets; until Twing died, from standing upon his head one day upwards of two hours in the broiling sun, the tenure by which he held the high employment of cutting the Emperor's corns, and the plates and dishes, being again published, derived additional interest from the circumstance, and by degrees were exported all over the world. We should like to know the house which does not possess one.

When we first heard there was a prospect of a war with China, we regarded it as a rumour of extreme eccentricity—a piece of exquisite fun, replete with droll actions and engagements. The impressions of the man are composed of the same elements as the ideas of childhood, although circumstance exerts a slight alteration in their affinity; and we could not entirely divest ourselves of the thoughts we were accustomed to link with "China and the Chinese," when the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, every word of whose gorgeous illusions we received as Gospel, ranked far above the productions of Shakspeare, Byron, or Scott, in our immature conception. Nor was the picture we formed of China conjured up by our own minds alone. We had the opportunity of referring to a valuable series of tea-canisters on the shelves of a neighbouring grocer, who opened his shop as the "China Tea Company," hung balloons in his windows, japanned his drawers, sold tea-chests for rabbit-hutches, and had a strange squat figure seated in the centre of the four-shilling Bohea compartment, that wagged its head and tongue

all day long at the gazers whom its antics attracted to flatten their noses against his panes of glass. From the aforesaid canisters we were enabled to glean much valuable pictorial information respecting the domestic manners of the Chinese. Probably, we might have studied the subject more deeply, but fate willed other-

wise. The concern failed, the shop was closed, and the "Company" ran off in the middle of the night, no one knew whither, and we believe no one cared, except those who had demands upon the establishment. We only wondered what effect the defalcation had upon the funds of the Celestial Empire.

We were a long time bringing ourselves to think that the Chinese were a nation of men and women; in fact, human beings, who thought, moved, and acted in a manner similar to ourselves. We much more readily inclined to the opinion that they were a race of supernaturally animated ornaments, who wore inverted basins for head-dresses, and kept odd-shaped dragons and monsters, all claws and crockery, for their domestic animals. We pictured to ourselves their abodes made of porcelain, painted all sorts of colours, and thatched with rice-paper. Their cities we conjured up as lighted by millions of isinglass lanterns, which kept perpetually turning round. Their vegetation we confined to curious strange arborescent productions, with large round vermilion balls for fruit, growing naturally in a state of the highest varnish; and we could almost see their public roads, buildings, and fortifications, all constructed of *papier-mâché*, gaily japanned. If war had been declared at that period, we should not have been much astonished to have found some morning that all the China ornaments in England had walked off spontaneously to take up the cause of their country, and fight in its defence. These ideas continued in full force with us for some long period, until a series of Eastern spectacles, which it was our luck to witness at the theatres, turned the current of our minds into another channel. For the first time we then became aware that real living beings formed the population of the country belonging to the Sun's intimate connexion; but even these differed from other people. They wore odd six-angled hats, a species of painted convolvulus-

shaped gossamers, with bells hung round them; they danced strange figures, with the forefingers of each hand elevated to the level of their ears; they allowed their mustachios to grow until they trailed upon the ground; and, in their stage encounters, one English sailor generally fought twelve at once, all of whom he finally put to flight, having cut off their pigtails, or whirled them round by these appendages, like horizontal bandalores, until they were choked. And is it true, we asked ourselves, that the Government is seriously thinking of going to war with these grotesque beings? What huge fun we immediately foresaw in the encounter; what a realization of the scenes in *Aladdin* and the *Bronze Horse*, to say nothing of *The Illustrious Stranger* and *Zazezizozu!* And our great men-of-war were sailing out, actually and literally sailing out, to engage with their junks—those odd constructions of thin painted laths, strips of red cloth, and reed masts with tea-leaf sails, that we could almost have built from imagination! Why, we should have thought that one small cannon-ball would have crashed through twenty of them at once, splintering and smashing them in all directions. It appeared perfectly cowardly in our nation to think for an instant of attacking in reality a set of poor scaramouches, who resided in inverted tea-cups on a large scale, lived on paper shavings and fried silkworms, built pagodas like magnified card houses, and whose most inspiring war-music was comprised in a band of copper stewpans. At length we heard that there really had been a skirmish, and that one of their great people, who rejoiced in the

high-sounding and aristocratic appellation of Lin, had written a letter, or published a document, or something of the kind. We should very much like to have seen that document. We will be bound it was something exquisitely comic, written with various inks, commencing at the bottom, and filled with characters from the endless alphabet which adorns the invoices of tea-chests and cakes of Indian ink. But—ha! ha! ha!—you can scarcely help smiling at the bare idea, the mere fact of their even daring to expostulate; they, of whom we should have conceived one halfpenny squib would have put to flight an army; they, whose cannon we thought must be varnished pasteboard, and whose fortifications carved ivory; they, whose only commerce consisted, independently of their tea, in pearl card-counters and books of gaudy birds and flowers, or ornaments like miniature trunks of trees with distorted spines, carved into human heads at the top; these odd creatures had remonstrated with England. How very ridiculous!

Why it is that the whole empire has not, long before this, been blown entirely to atoms by our guns, we are at a loss to conceive. British humanity must be the only obstacle to such a performance. But, if they are still insolent, we counsel instant and unmitigated annihilation of the whole of them; for what would all our former glories avail us, in the page of history, if we were finally jockeyed by a tribe of nodding mandarins, crockery-baking savages, painters of rice-paper, and manufacturers of chop-sticks and feather fans?

By way of a rider, we subjoin the last expresses from the Celestial Empire, by our own private electro-galvanic communication. As this rapid means of transmission carries despatches so fast that we generally get them before they are written, we are enabled to be considerably in advance of the common daily journals, more especially as we have obtained news up to next Midsummer.

The most important paper which has come to hand is the "Macao Sunday Times." It appears that the fortifications for surrounding Pekin are progressing rapidly; but that the Government have determined upon building the ramparts of japanned canvass and bamboo rods, instead of pounded rice, which was thought too fragile to resist the attacks of the English barbarians. Some handsome porcelain guns have been placed upon the walls, with a proportionate number of carved ivory balls, elaborately cut one inside the other. These, it is presumed, will split upon firing, and produce incalculable mischief and confusion. Within the gates a frightful magazine of gilt crackers and other fireworks has been erected, which, in the event of the savages penetrating the fortifications, will be exploded one after another to terrify them into fits, when they will be easily captured. This precaution has scarcely been thought necessary by some of the mandarins, as our great artist, Wang, has covered the external joss-house with frantic figures, that must strike terror to the souls of all beholders. Gold paper has also been kept burning upon altars of holy clay at every practicable point of the defences, which it is

hardly thought they will have the hardihood to approach; and the sacred ducks of Fanqui have been turned loose in the river, to retard the progress of the infidel fleet.

During the storm of last week the portcullis which had been placed in the northern gate, and was composed of solid rice-paper, with cross-bars of chop-sticks, was much damaged. It is now under repair, and will be coated entirely with tea-chest lead, to render it perfectly impregnable. The whole of the household troops and body-guard of the Emperor have also received new accoutrements of tin-foil and painted isinglass. They have likewise been armed with japanned bladders, containing peas and date-stones, which produce a terrific sound upon the least motion.

An Englishman has been gallantly captured this morning, in a small boat, by one of our armed junks. He will eat his eyes in the palace court this afternoon; and then, being enclosed in soft porcelain, will be baked to form a statue for the new pagoda at Bo-lung, the first stone of which was laid by the late Emperor, to celebrate his victory over the rude northern islanders.

" Canton.

"The Emperor has issued two following chops to the Hong merchants, forbidding them to assist or correspond with the invaders, under pain of having their finger-nails drawn out, and rings put in their eyelids. Howqua resists the order; and it is the intention of Lin, should he remain obstinate, to recommend his being pounded up with broken crockery, and

packed in Chinese catty packages, to be forwarded, as an example, to the Mandarin Pidding of the wild island.

"An English flag, stolen by a deserter from Chusan, will be formally insulted to-morrow in the market-place by the Emperor and his court. Derisive grimaces will be made at it by the mandarins of the sixth class; and it will subsequently be hoisted, in scorn, to blow at the mercy of the winds upon the summit of the palace, within sight of the barbarians.

"An English soldier, despatched by the barbarians on a mission of peace, was despatched by our people on his arrival."

A USEFUL RECEIPT.

HOW TO CURE LOVE.

TAKE three evening parties a-week, where you are not likely to fall in with the object of your affections; a few flirtations with the finest dark eyes you can procure, in the conservatory, after supper; six long waltzes with as many pretty girls, and taking them down for ice afterwards; four ballads nicely sung, without making faces, by the same number of beauties in the intervals of the quadrilles; a few visits to the Opera (if you have a box and *one* agreeable companion, *tant mieux*,) when Fanny Elssler dances the Cracovienne or the Cachoucha, in order that you may dream of her afterwards. N.B. The ground tier to be selected, if you can get it. Think, at the same time, that Ellen's features are more regular; that Harriet sings much better; that Emily's figure is more perfect; that Bessy's teeth and hands are much whiter; that Louisa has more intellect and mind; and that Mary's connexions are far more desirable. If all this fail, your case is desperate indeed, and you must try change of air, and a residence at Paris, Rome, or Venice during the Carnival.

PUNCH.

AMIDST the various inducements to loiter on your way, which the streets of London continually present, there is one object that always possesses for us an irresistible attraction, far above all others; and that is the peripatetic theatre of our adored friend Punch. No matter how pressing our business—no matter how late for our appointment we may be, or distant from the spot towards which we are progressing, the instant we hear Punch's shrill, expressive squeak, and behold the light framework of the scene of his gambols assuming a fixed perpendicular position, we bid a temporary adieu to aught else of consequence. And taking our place amongst the crowd of small boys, servant-maids, printers' devils, errand-carriers, and other street frequenters that surround his temple, we are for the time lost to everything but the tricks and drolleries, the sly manœuvres and deep-laid schemes, of our merry, bold, cowardly, deceitful, candid puppet.

We are never ashamed of being caught gazing at Punch. Many of our friends—nice young gentlemen of the glazed boot and lemon kid-glove school—have severely reprobated us for yielding to the inducements which the wooden hero holds out to arrest our steps;

but these chidings have invariably gone in at one ear and out at the other — a curious overland journey across the brain, which no philosopher has yet properly defined, although we hear of it hourly in society. We are not angry with our friends, for everybody has his own ideas of refinement and gentility; but we pity them. We regret that they allow themselves to be deprived of much amusement and real laughter, from a mistaken notion of the *comme-il-faut*. And if they are seen, what does it matter? There are puppets in society, whose tricks are similar to, and twice as mischievous as, the pranks of Punch, whom it is thought no disgrace to gaze at. But this is one of the results of our English "fear-of-what-other-people-think." In the Champs Elysées, the small rough benches which the poor exhibitor of Punch places in front of his show are thronged with grown-up and respectable people, who scream with uncontrolled delight at his vagaries. The French enjoy themselves, because they do not quail, as we do, beneath the opinions of their neighbours; and the same feeling which allows them to ride in roundabouts and revolving ships, permits them equally to enter, heart and soul, into the performances of Punch, without caring whether anybody they know is regarding them or otherwise.

We cannot, however, disguise the melancholy fact, that Punch is on the decline. It is true that he escaped the notice of the Metropolitan Police Act, and, whilst the dogs were emancipated from the trucks, he was permitted to bully and tease the hapless Toby to his heart's content; still, we fear his glories are

departing. Commend us to the goodly times when Mr. Powell, the prince of "motion-makers," set forth his exhibition "under the little Piazza in Covent Garden," and the Opera at the Haymarket was seriously injured by the *concurrence;* when the sparrows and chaffinches at the latter theatre, instead of perching on the trees, only put out the candles, and the

ballet yielded in attraction to the pig that danced a minuet with Punch. The clever paper of Steele, that made Pope shake his sides as he read it, related to no commonplace performance. But alas! the times are sadly changed. The Opera has resumed its sway, and a *pas de deux* between Perrot and Cerito is now thought superior to the celebrated opening dance between Punch and his consort.

Punch loves to be in the world, although he affects retirement from a great thoroughfare. He rather inclines to a quiet street that debouches into the stream of population. Hence the cul-de-sacs in the Strand that lead towards the river are sometimes favoured by him; for he is not annoyed there by passing vehicles, whilst he can attract a good audience from the foot-passengers. We have occasionally seen him at the bottom of Berners Street; more frequently in the offshoots of Tottenham Court Road; and very often in Castle Street, Leicester Square, his most favoured locality, where he collects a delighted crowd from the multitudes who are perpetually threading that extraordinary series of courts and archways, combs, straw-bonnets, cold ham, false teeth, and portmanteaus, that leads from New Street towards the West-end. Here he revels in uncontrolled wickedness; here his scream is more joyously shrill than in any other situation; and here his performance is generally of a more prolonged nature, from the change of audience, than his spectators are usually favoured with. And yet, we never saw the end of it—we do not believe any one ever did, for his antics are too often cut short by the

paucity of the last collection of coppers which has been solicited in the inverted cymbal.

Our ideas of Punch are of a mysterious and inexplicable kind. We cannot quite divest ourselves of the opinion, that he is not altogether an inorganic body—a mere compound of wood, calico, and dirty paint. We confess it without shame, we should not sleep tranquilly in our bed if Punch were lying on the toilet-table. We should feel more at our ease if we locked him up in a drawer previous to retiring to rest, because then we should know there was not such a chance of his amusing himself during the night by beating the back of our head with his all-powerful cudgel. Even in his own abode, although we are distinctly aware that there is a man in a fustian jacket and corduroy trowsers, with lace-up boots, directing his actions, we still concentrate all our ideas of vitality there enclosed in our frolicksome hero. The other persons of the drama are mere puppets, subservient to the proper performance of the comedy; but Punch is an exception to them. We can imagine him, when the show is over, carrying his pugnacious disposition into the oblong box that encloses him and his companions, and thrashing them with the same merciless vigour when shut up in the aforesaid case, as he did when he figured in public.

Whenever we see a Punch's show, we look upon the chief actor as the same being we have witnessed before, and invest him with the same propensities and internal economy. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the reality, that there are more Punches than one in the world; and nothing would distress our intellectual

faculties more than to see two Punches in one show. A sight like this would bewilder us; our mind would not be able to grapple with the confusion thus created. We would rather not witness so strange a sight, but incline to the theory that Punch is ubiquitous; that the same Punch who figures at the Fête of St. Cloud is the next moment, perhaps even at that very time, thrashing the constable to the delight of a London mob, or amusing the pleasure-seekers on the smooth turf of Egham race-course.

Punch is the only one of the street performers who does not care a bit for the policemen. We were watch-

ing his drama one day, in company with a friend, to whose able pencil we are indebted for the illustration, when a raw recruit of the Police force requested the wooden hero to "move on." But Punch, nothing daunted, immediately began to argue the case with his enemy, in which he succeeded so admirably, that the policeman was glad to slink off amidst the laughter and jeers of the audience. He could not have been more completely beaten had he been Jack Ketch, Shallabala, the constable, or any other of the puppets.

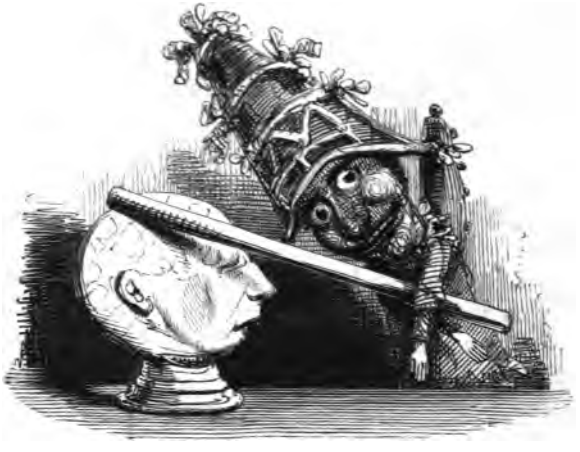
Punch enjoys an excellent constitution. Blows that would be sudden death to other people, fall lightly and unheeded upon his occiput. He merely exclaims, "How hard the wind blows!" and cures himself in five seconds by rubbing the back of his head against the wings of his theatre—a species of counter-irritation to which many quacks have, doubtless, been indebted for their ideas. One of his finest delineations, however, is the manner in which, after receiving a thrashing from the unknown intruder, he looks carefully round his theatre, to see from what quarter the injuries have proceeded, and concludes his search by leaning half over the front, and endeavouring to peer round the sides of the show. This is perfect, and only approached by his occasional convulsive shudders after the ghost has appeared to him, one of the most terrible personifications of supernatural fright ever exhibited. Nor does the Belgian Lion at Waterloo repose in calmer triumph over the mound of slaughtered heroes which it surmounts, than Punch does, when he tranquilly perches himself upon the line of victims to his con-

quering arm, whose lifeless forms embellish the front board of his theatre.

The drama of Punch has suffered material change within the last few years. The baby, Jack Ketch, the gallows, and the—(we hesitate to write his name) the — enemy of mankind, have almost disappeared. Their places have been supplied by a clown, and divers other characters. We have also witnessed a tin caddy, through which Jim Crow pokes his head, when Punch's curiosity leads him to peep into the interior; and a spectre made of wood, with an enormous mouth of red cloth. We do not like these innovations. They look like a taste for spectacle, and, where this prevails, the legitimate drama must fall. Punch is to the Fantoccini what Shakspeare is to the ballets of her Majesty's Theatre, and we should not wish either to merge into the other. Some mercenary proprietors have desecrated Punch's show by turning it to account with an evening exhibition of Chinese shadows, illuminated by various candle-ends placed behind. This is unpardonable; and we were exceedingly rejoiced to see the transparent screen destroyed by accidental conflagration, a few evenings since, in Bloomsbury Square. It was a just visitation.

In conclusion, we have a question to ask, connected with our immortal friend; and, if any of our readers can solve it, we shall be more than happy to receive their communications. How is Punch's unearthly voice produced? Is it a natural sound, or the result of some peculiar instrument in the mouth? We were taught in infancy, that two quadrangular pieces of tin, bound

together by narrow tape, would produce the desired effect, when placed between the lips. This is not the fact. A squeaking sound may be perpetrated through their use, but no articulation of words is practicable; and we opine that the noise is the result of much training, or natural conformation of the muscles of the organs of voice. One use these tin instruments certainly possess. A lady of our acquaintance bitterly offended us. We could not openly retaliate, so we cloaked our anger under the mask of kindness. We made four of the above whistles, and gave them to the same number of her children. Our vengeance was complete; the house was the scene of one long, continuous squeak, from morning till night, as shrill as Punch's, without the advantage of his sage remarks.



Punch on the head.

SCIENCE AND THE FAIRIES.

WHEN Father Time was in his prime,
Some thousand years ago,
Ere his beard was long, or his pinions strong,
Or his locks as white as snow;

In our merrie land there dwelt a band
Of tiny joyous elves,
Who owned no order or command
From any but themselves.

And each one lived in a cottage ornée,
Of these elfin gamesome things,
That the tiger-moth thatched with his plume so gay,
And glazed with a dragon-fly's wings.

They danced all night in the moonbeams bright,
And quaffed their cowslip wine;
Then hid their heads in their moths'-down beds,
Ere day began to shine.

And they revelled long with their dance and song,
Till a strange gigantic dame
A visit paid to their forest glade,
And Science was her name.

Her lungs were air-pumps of wondrous size,
Her breath blew forth in steam;
And with oxyhydrogen her eyes
Like meteor sparks did gleam.

With triple cranks and rack-work neat
Her limbs and joints did move,
And her vital powers were raised to heat
With a Dr. Arnott's stove.

The fairies gazed on this fearful sight;
Then swift through the summer air,
In a dreadful fright, they all took flight
To the realms of my lord knows where.

They have gone for aye, for since that day
They no longer in England dwell;
Lone is the glade and the leafy shade,
And forsaken each quiet dell.

And Science still her march keeps on;
But, since that epoch dread,
Our legends old to their graves have gone,
And Romance herself has fled.

PROPOSALS FOR A NEW MATRIMONIAL AGENCY OFFICE.

We are daily receiving letters from young ladies in all parts of London and the country, complaining of the present most appalling state of proposal-destitution to which they are reduced. The various stories of distress in the philandering districts are literally fearful. A correspondent relates the case of one party of young ladies, who have subsisted without a single offer during the entire season; and it is feared that, should the present Government take no measures to alleviate this state of destitution, the fair sufferers will rise *en masse*, and marry all the existing bachelors by sheer force.

To meet this crisis, we have determined upon opening a matrimonial agency, with a society for protection against flirts; and, in order that any young lady may make her *locale* known to any gentleman who has paid her more than ordinary attention, we have instituted a central office, where, in the fashion of shipping intelligence, every information will be afforded. The lists at present thus stand; and male coquets, after perusing them, will have no excuse for want of attention on the plea of not knowing the locality of their innamorata.

MARRY-TIME INTELLIGENCE.

DEAL, Sep. 24th.—Arrived the Blanche M—; the Amy B—; the Augusta S—; the Louisa A—; and the Anne Eliza C—.

BRIGHTON, Oct. 7th, wind S.W.—A pink bonnet of small dimensions was seen off the Old Steine, and presumed to be that of the Mary F—. A small lavender glove was afterwards picked up on the beach, which strengthens the supposition.

YOUNG LADIES SPOKEN WITH.

The Ellen Howard, of Bryanston Square, at Windsor, on the 21st inst., obliged to put into a pastry-cook's shop during a sudden storm.

COWES.—The Harriet de Vere ran on shore here this morning, with loss of sandal, from the Southampton steamboat, having been on board to wish her cousins good-b'ye, just as the last bell rang for starting.

The Alicia Hamilton, of Kensington, on the cliffs at Ramsgate, during a gale of wind; hair rather deranged, and parasol blown inside out.

The Fanny Lewis, of Hornsey, in great distress off the North Foreland, in the ladies' cabin of the *City of Boulogne*.

The Caroline Daventry, of Park Crescent, scudding with close-reefed topsails, in a gallopade at an evening party, in Gower Street.

CLEARED OUTWARDS WITH CARGO.

Several glass coaches, containing the young ladies of

Mrs. Mindcrammer's establishment at Chiswick, with their luggage and tapestry-frames, bound to various parts of London for the Easter recess.

A travelling carriage, from Sir Henry Fairlove's, in Portman Square, with his three daughters inside, the governess and parrot on the box, and the ladies' maid in the rumble. Sir Henry says he is going abroad to educate his children; the world reports it is to retrench his expenses.

CLEARED OUTWARDS FOR LADING.

The Dowager Lady Bobbleton, with empty pockets, to the gaming-tables of the Conversations-haus at Baden-Baden. N.B. She takes her niece with her.

Fancy Fairs will be held weekly, and a very liberal supply of guinea pen-wipers, sovereign card-racks, ten-shilling perforated card sticking-plaster cases, and half-a-crown coloured-paper nothings, will be provided for the stalls. Ladies paying a trifle extra will be accommodated with a tent lined with pink calico, for the sake of throwing a fascinating glow over the features; and, when a lady is observed to be holding any very interesting conversation with a gentleman, proper persons will be appointed to prevent other would-be purchasers from intruding. Everybody inclined to argue upon the propriety of giving change for ten-pound notes will be immediately taken into custody by the police.

The institution has it also in contemplation to give an uninterrupted series of balls during the season, at which a number of half-pay officers, of stern and portly aspect, will be engaged, for the express purpose of asking nervous young gentlemen their intentions, if they are seen flirting with any young lady who is a shareholder in the Agency.

Dahlia Shows will also take place during the autumn, as everybody is aware of the incalculable benefit arising from pushing round the narrow passage

of the marquees to see the flowers; and carriages and tickets will be provided, free of all expense, to take the subscribers to the *fêtes* at Chiswick. This arrangement is especially dwelt upon, as it is extremely easy for a young lady to "miss" her party in the crowd. From these meetings all single aunts, poor cousins, and confirmed old bachelors, will be scrupulously excluded; prettier younger sisters will also only be admitted under severe restrictions. And if there is a large family of girls, all single, this circumstance will be kept strictly private, as it alone often deters many a young gentleman from proposing to one of them, for fear he should at the same time *marry the whole family*, or be perpetually overdone by his wife's sisters coming "to stay a little time with her."

MR. PERCIVAL JENKS, AND THE BALLET-GIRL.

THE ballet had concluded; the lustres of the chandelier had ceased to vibrate with the last plaudits; and the people in the dress-circle, who commenced getting up and looking after their gloves and boas when the blue fire of the last scene was ignited by the men with the lucifer-matches behind the wings, had already gained the lobby. The fall of the drop-curtain had dispelled the charm. The bright eyes of the *coryphées* were veiled, and the last glimpse of their satin-shod and twinkling feet had been snatched away; in fact, sylphs had yielded to everyday mortals, and the Danube's flowery banks to Brydges Street and Vinegar Yard; when Mr. Percival Jenks elbowed his way out of the pit, and marched, with excited feelings and romantic thoughts, in the direction of the Strand.

We wish we could tell what Mr. Percival Jenks was; but *that* was never known to a soul except his

employer—not even to the landlady of the tenement, in whose apartments he occupied a second-floor back bed-room. The good lady knew he was "something in a house in the city;" but her information extended no further. What were his favourite pursuits, however, and his usual habits—his instinctive economy, we were about to say, in compliance with the scientific taste of the age—was less occult. In winter he led a chrysalis kind of life—not exactly buried in dirt, with his arms and legs tucked up against his ribs, but wrapped up within himself, as it were, (for his duffel dressing-gown, which he delighted to indulge in when at home, was his own epitome,) and seldom stirring out beyond his usual compulsory attendance at his situation, except on an occasional pantomimical excursion, or shilling's-worth of harmony and "hot with" at the Eagle. But, at the first approach of spring, Mr. Percival Jenks followed up his entomological analogy, and burst forth into light and life, in company with everything else around him, from the black-laden aspirants to vegetation in the squares, to the solitary hyacinth that bloomed from a cracked water-carafe on his mantelpiece. The first gleam of a sunny afternoon was celebrated by the investment of a certain sum in a bottle of reviver, for the improvement of his frock-coat; and having well humoured his hat with a wet brush, and inked the edges, carefully pasting pieces of card inside, to act as splints to the fractured tissues of the crown, he washed his silk gloves, bought a light-blue figured satin stock, allowed his hair to grow somewhat longer than ordinary, and, studiously dressing himself every

day on his return from the city, would then turn out in all the pride of his appearance, and believe himself a man about town.

It was coming from Drury Lane Theatre that we first presented him to the reader; and, like Romeo, we introduced him sighing and in love, for his heart had been that night suddenly taken by storm. The third ballet-girl from the left-hand stage-box, with the golden belt and green wreath, in the Pas des Guirlandes, or lyres, or umbrellas, or something of the kind, had enslaved his susceptible affections. He mechanically

wandered to the Cyder Cellars, and bespoke his supper; but the beautiful *danseuse* still haunted him, and the harmony of that convivial resort of play-goers fell unheeded on his ear. He thought of nought but *her*. Now her image, dwindled to fairy dimensions, stood poised on the top of his roast potatoe, now she laughingly skimmed the frothy surface of his pint of stout, and anon rose playfully bewitching amidst the smoke of his cigar.

When a man is at all in love, a glass of brandy-and-water wonderfully deepens his affections, and throws a romantic halo round the beloved object. Matchmaking people who give evening parties know this axiom well; or they would not be so lavish of their iced punch and champagne, to whose combined influence so many proposals are in debt. *Par conséquence*, Mr. Jenks, having slightly indulged, arrived at home in a state bordering on delirium, his thoughts being wildly thrown about in his brain; but amidst the confusion of ideas the ballet-girl was still floating uppermost, like a nut tossed about in the gutter of Botolph Lane. The lodgers who resided in the same house were alarmed at the frequent sounds of ten fantastic toes falling anything but lightly on the floor of Mr. Jenks's room for half an hour after he went up stairs with his candle; and one of those, who had the curiosity to look through the keyhole of his room, reported that he saw Percival in an aerial ballet-dress, composed of a red pocket-handkerchief girding his blue-striped night-shirt round the waist, throwing himself into strange pantomimic attitudes before the looking-glass, chiefly expressive of

eternal love, which he several times performed in the most approved fashion, by rapping his chest violently and rapidly with his right hand, and then raising it towards the skies, or, rather, where they were supposed to be. At last he got tired, and putting out his candle bounded into bed, after missing his aim and springing against the post; for mankind had not yet arrived at the luxury of a self-extinguisher—a dreadful little instrument, that embraces the wick with a *pop!* which frightens you to death for the first three months you use it. But even in the dark his thoughts still wandered to the beautiful dancer, and he pictured her, all smiles and attitudes, hovering about his French bed, and dancing a *pas seul* upon the wash-hand-stand, until he went to sleep, when he dreamt he was a young Arcadian bacchanal, with roses in his hair, receiving wine from his goddess, who stood on the toe of one foot as she poured it out, while she flung the other several inches higher than her own head.

He awoke in the morning from his blissful slumbers feverish and unsettled. The head clerk at his "house in the city" discovered him drawing little opera-dancers all over his blotting-paper, and his accounts were so very unsatisfactory that he was obliged to stay two hours after-time to make them up. At half-price, nevertheless, he was at the play again; his whole existence centred in an airy compound of clear muslin and white satin that was twirling about the stage. The play-bill afforded him no clue to her name, or he would have called for her when the curtain fell. In vain he looked upon the long list of Misses Farebrother, Mar-

shall, Platt, Taylor, A. Kendall, Reekie, and company. These he knew, but the other's appellation still remained a mystery. He went again the next night, and the next, and the next. But at length he began to find his exchequer would not stand this continued run of dissipation. The pit had already given way to the two-shilling gallery, and the two-shilling gallery in turn had yielded to the celestial portion of the house above it. Mr. Percival Jenks had much internal combating before he could descend to this elevation, if we may express the change thus paradoxically; but love overcame all his other senses. As the money fell short, even this was given up, and he had now no other alternative but to wait at the stage-door for the chance of seeing the lady of his heart.

Here, then, for several nights did he take his stand amongst the crowd of shabby idlers who loiter about the avenues of a theatre. How anxiously he counted out the house! First came the orchestra, then the peasants and villagers, then the second-rate actors, next the stars, and finally the scene-shifters; but no vision of the ballet-girl greeted his vision. Sometimes he imagined that such an aerial creature disdained the earth, and evaporated through the chandelier, or left the house by some equally strange manœuvre—so fair a creation could never belong to the faded cloaks and drabby bonnets that issued from the theatrical sanctum.

For many nights did Mr. Jenks post himself at the stage-door, in painful expectation of meeting the loved object; and as many times was he disappointed. Sometimes he almost inclined himself to believe that

the whole race of ballet-girls were not mortal; in fact, that they were constituted of the essential particles of gas, music, and delusion, that floated about the play-house, (in the same manner as the old philosophers described the production of blight and fireflies,) dissolving into thin air once more, when the performance had concluded. At all events, it was an extremely difficult creed to reconcile himself to, that the same aerial beings who had been riding on wicker butterflies, flying on muslin clouds, or floating in baths of canvass stretched on wooden frames, in the midst of all the dazzling excitement of a theatre, could go quietly home to sup off bread and cheese, or perhaps onions, or baked sheep's heads. No, no, it was not likely; they must live, he thought, on the petals of flowers, and drink dew—pure, ethereal mountain dew. Perhaps they did!

One night, after waiting at his accustomed post with his usual want of success, Jenks turned by chance into a neighbouring house for a bottle of ginger-beer, to allay his thirsty and agitated excitement. It was a theatrical tavern—a house of call for minor actors, where standard-bearers, mobs, pantomime shopkeepers, imps, and banditti could always be engaged on the shortest notice. Here congregated those facetious individuals who tumble down on the slide which the clown has made with a pat of butter: here also were attendant demons to be found, warranted not to cough, or be choked, in the middle of the most dense fumes from the tray of red fire ever ignited, as they came up the trap; and here also might be met Chinese Brothers, Parisian Incomprehensibles, Saltimbanques of

Syria, Athenian Athletæ, Herculean Egyptians, Bounding Bedouins—in fine, wonderful people from

every corner of the earth, and whose most incredible talent, after all, was the perfect knowledge they had acquired of English customs and language.

The bar and parlour of this house were in perfect keeping with its frequenters. The walls were adorned with portraits of every actor that had ever lived, in every character that he ever performed; and there were several pictures of the same actors in two or three different characters, which proved how admirably the performer could change the entire contour of his features

together with his costume. Over the fire-place were two elegant chimney ornaments, being representations of Mr. Someone as El Hyder, and Mrs. Somebody else as Joan of Arc, mounted upon pasteboard, and glittering with stamped tinsel and gold dots. There had been a companion to the above in the shape of Mrs. Honey as Apollo; but the figure first got very rickety about the ankles, and at last, in spite of the match glued on behind, broke off altogether, leaving only a pair of blue boots attached to the ground-piece. The very placards of the prices of various liquors retailed were theatrical. Clowns and pantaloons were fighting with bottles of ginger-beer at "*3d.* a bottle," harlequins supported tablets inscribed with advice to "try our Kennet ale at sixpence;" and Paul Prys, Jim Crows, and Pusses in Boots abounded on all sides, lending their aid to vaunt the superiority of the different wines or spirits whose unparalleled cheapness they recorded. The whole interior, in fact, bore the resemblance to a pantomime scene, and you would not have been much taken by surprise, if with a touch of the magic wand the whole of the walls and fixtures would have turned inside out, or flapped up and down, changing into the Fairy Palace of the Star of Diamonds, or some other of the regions of delight that conclude our Christmas entertainments. Where those joyous realms are situated we know not—we are only introduced to their glittering localities once a-year; and then, with too painful a resemblance to the momentary flashes of happiness which sometimes are allowed to burst upon our own dull world, they are

snatched away from our sight, leaving all commonplace and life-like as before.

When Mr. Jenks entered the house, a knot of shabby-looking men were collected round the bar, discussing with much enthusiasm the various matters of temporary interest connected with the different theatres. By degrees our hero joined the circle; he possessed a slight acquaintance with the subject of their conversation—sufficient, at all events, to enable him to give an occasional opinion—and he gradually entered into their arguments; nor was he long in discovering that two of the party were members of the Drury Lane Company. The outlay of sixpence in a pot of the aforesaid "Kennet Ale" procured him an additional degree of respect and a firmer footing in their society; and, before long, one of them had invited Mr. Jenks to accompany him behind the scenes the next night, on condition that he would not object to appear on the stage.

"Will it not be intruding?" asked Percival modestly.

"By no means, sir," returned the man. "The ballet is a heavy piece, and an additional supernumerary will be an advantage rather than otherwise. Should you like to be a vassal or a nobility?"

Percival debated the question in his own mind for an instant. He, however, at last, inclined to the aristocracy, and expressed his determination to become "a nobility," as his new friend had termed it. The man accordingly appointed a rendezvous for six o'clock the next evening; and Mr. Jenks retired home, full of

anticipated happiness, and contemplating the prospect of an introduction to the beloved object.

The next day wore sluggishly away, and a quarter of an hour before the appointed time Percival found himself at the theatrical tavern, in a mingled state of excitement, expectation, and xx ale—a small quantity of which he had imbibed to give him the confidence necessary for his "first appearance upon any stage." His new acquaintance was not long before he joined him, and they walked together in the direction of the stage-door of the theatre, Mr. Jenks not having a perfectly distinct idea of whether he was progressing forwards upon his head or his heels.

They entered the door of the sanctum of the play-house—the mysterious and spell-girt *coulisses*—and threaded their way through various narrow and intricate passages; now stumbling up, and anon tumbling down, small flights of stairs, and then falling over properties, ropes, spars, and set pieces, which were strewn or crowded in all directions. The walls were rough and unplastered, or covered with thin coats of dirty white-wash; jets of flaring gas burst out at short intervals; and people were constantly hurrying backwards and forwards, pushing Mr. Jenks about in every direction, and requiring him to control his bewildered ideas to the personal care of himself—at least, as far as he was able to do so.

After passing through a part of the theatre appropriated to all sorts of odd frameworks and contrivances for some display—amongst which he recognised various old well-known stone crosses, wheels for water-mills,

and flowery banks and arbours, as well as ruined columns, fortified gateways, and gothic arches, made from wood and canvass, by a species of theatrical petrifaction, a sudden turn brought him unexpectedly upon the stage, immediately behind the enormous curtain, whose mighty expanse was hanging in sullen grandeur, until the three knocks of the prompter should arouse its attendant machinery.

And this, then, was the stage of Old Drury! This large sloping floor of worn and dirty boards, intersected by rough grooves and slides, and perforated by traps and falling platforms at every step—this area of dust, chalk, splinters, stains, and protruding rails and pegs, was the scene of those countless wonders he had so often gazed upon, when, from the two-shilling gallery, its surface appeared clean, smooth, and regular, as the floors of Windsor Castle! But above all, this was the spot hallowed by the presence of the loved object —he could almost trace the particular board on which her tiny foot descended after one of her aerial bounds. And she would be there again to-night. He should see her — breathe the same air that she did, (and a delightful atmosphere of gas, brimstone, oil, and wet size, it was, only besides being blind, Love occasionally wants some other of the senses,) above all, he might perhaps speak to her!

By degrees he became sensible of the buzz of the audience, broken by the intervening curtain into a low continued murmur. The orchestra, too, began to tune. First, a solitary violin, like the early chirp of a restless sparrow, or what writers of more poetical invention

would call the first morning carol of the bird of the greenwood, gave the note. This provoked other sounds—the French-horn, who had not yet entered the orchestra, indulged in some flourishes of his own whilst yet under the stage; the trumpet took his instrument to pieces, and blew through each bit separately; the drum performed some manœuvres with the pieces of cord that were stretched along the side, in the self-opiniated idea that a drum was capable of being tuned; and the triangle, who had not much to arrange, first looked all round the house, and then nodded, with a patronizing air, to a friend whom he recognised in the front row of the pit.

At last, the overture commenced, and the groups took their respective stations upon the stage, for the first scene of *The Siege of Rochelle*. Mr. Jenks remarked, with some expressions of *naïve* astonishment, that the helmets of the soldiers were not of real steel, and that the peasantesses on the right were working without needles. He moreover observed, that they were about to "drink to Victory" in copious libations of air, which philosophically considered, was the only fluid that filled the cups and flagons. He would have indulged in more minute discoveries, had not his friend told him, that the stage must be cleared of all extraneous characters, for the opening chorus; whereupon, he retired behind the wings, first receiving strict injunctions not to go beyond a certain line, because if he did they could see him from the audience part of the house; and the generality of playgoers were getting so very acute in their ideas of dress, that they knew

brown tail coats and drab trowsers were not the costumes worn at Rochelle at the period of the siege.

The first act passed away, and Mr. Jenks had seen nothing of his goddess. At this period, his theatrical Mentor summoned him to the gentlemen's dressing-room, in order that his costume might be provided for the ballet. As there was no dress laid out for him, he followed his friend up-stairs to the wardrobe; a long room lined with presses, and provided with large counters, on which were deposited all sorts of tunics, trunks, tights, and tinselled tabards and trimmings. Here he was soon provided with a suit of extraordinary splendour of appearance (from the house); and taking it under his arm, he retraced his steps to the dressing-room, and contrived, by some means or another, to get into it, although it certainly cut him a little under the arm, and was not so long in the waist as it might have been. His friend applied a little coarse rouge to his cheeks with a hare's foot; and having turned him round two or three times, as if he was playing at blind-man's-buff, without a bandage, declared him perfectly in order to take his place in the groups as a nobility.

With a palpitating heart, Mr. Jenks allowed himself to be led on to the stage, and, not without some misgivings, did he listen to the directions for his subsequent demeanour. At length the awful moment arrived. The visitors of the Baron had to make their appearance, and, sticking close to his friend, he plunged from behind the side-scene into the full blaze of the lamps and sight of the audience. For an instant he saw nothing but an indistinct and blinding glare,

amidst which the foot-lamps appeared to be performing a ballet of their own. But, by degrees, the immense *salle* and its occupants became apparent, forming a vast amphitheatre of heads on each side, which gradually vanished in the distant elevations of the gallery. Between him and the audience, various delicate forms, all with their backs towards him, were twirling and bounding over the stage, and these instantaneously riveted his sight. Yes—there, at the well-known spot, was the equally familiar golden belt and green wreath, flinging their attendant pair of arms joyously in the air, or linking them in a beauteous circle with their fair companions.

"Bow, bow," said his friend, as the dance concluded, and applause rang through the house.

Mr. Jenks inferred it was to the audience he should make the salute, and accordingly he bent low towards them.

"Pshaw!" remarked his friend, spinning him forcibly round; "You must bow to the Baron—he is supposed to give the feast."

And scarcely knowing what he did, Mr. Jenks repeated his inclination to the Baron, after everybody else had finished. The curtain at this moment descended for the conclusion of the first act, and Percival, before it had half fallen, hastened towards the spot just occupied by the loved object. As the heavy roller of the drop-scene touched the ground he was at her side.

Lovers are an extraordinary set of people. When they are absent from the adored object, they think of nothing else: they indulge in long imaginary conversations, and receive all sorts of delightful ideal replies

in return; and yet the minute they come into contact, (provided of course that they are not regularly engaged, which diminishes a great deal of their romance,) they stand sidling about, as silent as a back street on a wet Sunday, hazarding a few very commonplace remarks; and directly they have parted, loading themselves with self-reproaches for what they might have said. Thus it proved with Mr. Percival Jenks. The instant that he found himself near the idol of his affections — so near that the silver-bound flounce of her white muslin dress touched his long red stockings — he appeared deprived of utterance, and remained in one fixed position, gazing very devotedly at the green wreath. And he was slightly annoyed at one circumstance: the lady, on her side, took no notice of him; although he was sure she must often have observed him applaud her amongst the ten or twelve hundred other auditors. She never even turned her eyes towards him, but appeared to be directing all her attention to the performance of certain positions and attitudes, with no other object that he could perceive than the amusement of a tipsy scene-shifter, who was half asleep inside the Sonnambula mill-wheel. He thought upon a dozen various methods to commence a dialogue with her, and abandoned them all in turn; some being too reserved, others too familiar, and the rest incapable of producing the impression he wished to make at first starting. At last, he thought he would place himself directly opposite to her, and smile very blandly.

"Now, sir, I'll trouble you to move," said another scene-shifter, who was carrying a side-scene for

the next act, which looked to Percival like a large clothes-horse covered with dirty canvas, and to the audience like the massy stone buttress of a prison.

This was very annoying, for Mr. Jenks had that instant attracted the attention of the *danseuse*—at least, he thought he had. Before he could recover his position, the whole troop of young ladies went chattering and laughing up a steep flight of stairs to their dressing-rooms, because the peasant girls of one scene had to go on as water-nymphs in another, and a consequent change of apparel was requisite. Like the brave old oak, Percival found himself "left in his pride alone," and he retreated in melancholy and disappointed humour to join his friend, and receive instructions as to what he was to do next when the act began.

In a short time, the curtain once more rose upon the wonders of the ballet, and the nymphs of the Danube again appeared upon the stage. Percival could still distinguish the form of his beloved one amidst the throng of dancers; and when the gentleman in white tights ran about amongst the water-sprites as if in search of somebody, first catching hold of one and then of the other, and occasionally seizing Percival's adored one, he thought what a happy person the gentleman in such a case must be. All this time he was inventing a fine speech to make to the young lady when he had an opportunity of once more addressing her; and at last he composed one which he thought the *beau idéal* of gallantry. But, throughout the performance he never could contrive to get near her. When he was off the stage, the loved object

was, in company with the other attendant sprites, delighting the audience close up to the front lamps; and yet, whenever he was on the scene, bowing to the Baron, he could see the fair one spinning and bounding about in the side-scenes like a top that had taken too much. Now she was playfully endeavouring to place her sandal on the top of a scene-shifter's head; now she was jumping over the rain, or seeing how high she could touch the thunder; and now—could it really be, that she was drinking something out of a pint pot! No! impossible; she was

merely practising how she should hold the silver goblet in a future scene. At least, this was the object of the performance that Percival, in the kindness of affection, ascribed to her. Whether he was right or not we will not pretend to say.

At last, the ballet concluded, and everybody that had been concerned in it retired to divest themselves of their gaudy apparel, and once more descend to the costume of common mortals. In company with the others, Percival retreated to the dressing-room, and hurriedly proceeded to skin off—for they were very tight—his garments of nobility, in the hope that he might gain the stage-door before the lady of his heart left. But again his evil genius was against him. The *danseuse* had promised to execute a *pas seul* that evening for the benefit of a friend at a musical tavern in the neighbourhood, where there was a sixpenny concert every night, and accordingly had left the theatre in a patent cab the instant the curtain fell. Ignorant of this, Mr. Jenks waited everybody out of the house, until the watchman himself came to close the door; then he tore himself away, having first made an appointment with his new friend to attend the rehearsal the next morning, when, if he got through his duties tolerably well, an indistinct hint was held out of twelve shillings a-week salary, to be paid by instalments, when he could get them.

Our ideas of external objects, good or bad, are intimately connected with the frame of mind we chance to be in when we notice them. Percival was in a very ill-humour, and he allowed it to throw a gloomy mantle

over everything that came in his way. What business had the people with ham sandwiches and boiled feet to bother him with their importunities to purchase! The very baked-potato men followed him with their rubbish, and the cabmen appeared more than ever obtrusively inquisitive, interrupting his chain of thoughts every minute with their hails. When he got home, he found fault with the keyhole of the street-door: next he quarrelled with every bolt in succession, as he fastened it after him, finishing by bestowing a look of profound contempt upon the chain; and when he reached his bed-room he was so displeased with the window-blinds, bed-furniture, looking-glass, and snuffers, that it is a wonder how he had contrived to live there so long under such an accumulation of domestic grievances. Perhaps the looking-glass was most deserving of his ire. It was a swing one, and, like all its species, persisted obstinately in tumbling forwards the instant you went to look in it. Once it could be fixed by turning round the knobs at the side, but that was at a period long passed away; and now the only plan to ensure its services was to wedge it immovably with the handle of the hair-brush against one of its pillars. Having accomplished this, Mr. Jenks proceeded to divest himself of the rouge that still adorned his cheeks; and then getting into bed, fairly moped himself to sleep, when he dreamed that all his fairest wishes were accomplished—a melancholy delusion that haunts our slumbers whenever the really desired object is most remote from being fulfilled, as if the painful reality of waking to gloom and sorrow was meant to

prove how little worth are the wanderings of fancy and imagination against the hard truths which life is constantly teaching us.

His excuse for absence from his "house in the city" the next morning was easily anticipated. And a glorious one it was—one that has put off more parties than any other, where the expense began to frighten the givers; one that has declined more invitations than any other, where the society was not too much admired; one that has thrown up unwelcome visits, broken unpleasant appointments, shirked long-winded intruders; in fact, one that has served everybody at all times—the universal, escapeless, convenient *influenza*. This amiable malady answered every purpose Mr. Jenks desired. His employer, who expected some people for money, was laid up with the same complaint, and therefore he could not grumble at his clerk for having it. Besides, he had been at a party the night before, where the hostess had met with fifty refusals that morning. It is true, that the children in the house had been ill with the scarlet fever since the invitations first went out and were accepted, but this could not have been the reason. It certainly was very generally prevalent indeed. Accordingly, Percival took unto himself a holiday; and, punctual to his agreement, met his theatrical friend as he had appointed, when they both went together to the rehearsal.

If there is a truly forlorn and deplorable spectacle in the world, next to a bachelor's room the morning after a convivial party, it is the interior of a theatre by daylight; when the cold light streams in from nu-

merous small windows and apertures over the galleries and chandeliers, revealing the tawdry decorations of the house in all their poverty. And very cheerless indeed did the playhouse look when Percival entered; the whole of its vast area of pit, boxes, and gallery being totally deserted, except by a few remote and indistinct forms, who were knocking brooms about amongst the benches, and sweeping up all the orange-peel, nut-shells, torn playbills, and odd gloves, that the audience of the preceding evening had left behind them. The gentlemen of the orchestra were performing some pieces of music that awakened loud echoes in the comparatively empty building, and small knots of ill-dressed people, the majority of whom appeared to revel in second-hand editions of cast-off fashions, were collected about in different situations, hurriedly gabbling over the dialogue which was to delight the evening's audience. At one of the wings, a crowd of noisy girls had collected, who appeared to set little value upon the frequent and authoritative commands for silence that were launched against them. It was amongst these Percival made sure of finding his fair one; and if one voice more soft, one laugh more silvery, than the others, rose above the general clatter, he made sure it was hers. He would have gone over to them; but not knowing how far stage etiquette allowed such a proceeding during a rehearsal, he kept in his place, and contented himself by putting a few interrogatories to his companion.

"Do you know the young lady," he inquired, "who dances in the ballet, with a green wreath round her head?"

"And a gilt belt round her waist?" asked the friend in turn.

"The same. Who is she?" eagerly demanded Percival.

"Oh—its Miss—Miss—I shall forget my own name next."

Percival was about to suggest Rosière, Celeste, Amadée, and some other pretty cognomens, when his companion caught the name, and exclaimed,

"Miss Jukes. I thought I should recollect it."

The name certainly was not what Percival had expected: still, what was in a name?—"Jenks" was not very poetical, and the other was something like it.

"Could you favour me with an introduction to her?" he asked.

"In a minute, if you wish it," returned his companion.

"You know her intimately, then?"

"Very. I buy all my greengrocery of her."

He bought all his greengrocery of her! She was mortal, then, and kept a shop. In a state of semi-bewilderment, Percival crossed the stage with his friend towards where the dancers stood. He heard her called by her name; she turned, and they were introduced.

Gracious powers! how a minute broke the enchantment of many weeks. The nymph of the Danube was habited in a faded green cloak, and straw bonnet, with limp and half-bleached pinked ribbons clinging to its form. Her pallid and almost doughy face was deeply pitted with the small-pox; her skin was rough, from the constant layers of red and white paint it had to

endure; her hair was twisted up into two paper screws on her forehead; and her nails, which appeared at the ends of her worn-out gloves, almost tempted Percival to ask himself, in the words of a celebrated national poet, "Did you ever behold such a little black row?" Moreover, she had evidently been indulging in a meal from an edible root that nobody ever thinks of touching if they are going to an evening party afterwards.

And this, then, was the object of his affection! Had his love so blinded him that he never allowed

for the advantages of light, dress, and distance? He fell back with a convulsive start, and, darting from his companion, rushed out of the theatre in the most frenzied manner possible, and hurried home; where, on gaining what he termed the solitude of his own chamber, he hid his head under the bed-clothes, and moaned grievously for half an hour, until the lodgers, thinking he must be seriously ill, assembled in a body on the landing, and recalled him to his senses by breaking in the door.

It was his first love, and his last. The illusion had been too harshly broken for him ever to fall into the same error again. He put all womankind down as ballet-girls, and he invested them all with the same deceptive beauty. The theatre lost all its charms for him: he felt, he saw everything through a false medium; and, mistrusting the rosy cheeks, white arms, and long dark tresses of the *coryphées*, he only pictured them as he would fain believe they appeared at a morning rehearsal.

MORAL.

Young gentlemen! if you are particularly struck with any young lady whom you may meet in society, think of Mr. Jenks, and do not believe she is always as attractive as she appears at a time when her sole aim may be to seem pleasant and agreeable. Remember, that the following morning she may be as altered as a *cottage ornée*—which you have only seen before during the summer—appears on Christmas day; in fact, that there is an extreme difference between night and morn-

ing in the appearance of a beauty—an assertion, to the truth of which those who have seen the lady passengers of a night coach or French diligence turn out to breakfast, can fully testify. Trust rather to the mind than to the face; and if you are in a hurry to propose, ask yourself candidly whether you think the same impression would have been made had you been born blind. There is a theatrical medium in the great world, as well as in a playhouse, through which alone we view its most agreeable scenes. This will flatter and disguise all objects for a time, but sooner or later you will find them out, and come to the conclusion, that infatuation and enthusiasm are delightful passions in their way, until you are admitted by experience *behind the scenes*.

A STRANGE VISIT.

THE STORY OF A DISSECTING-ROOM PORTER.

SOME twelve years ago, at the time I was employed at the W—— Street School of Medicine, I received directions one evening to apply the next night at the prison in the Old Bailey, where there would be the body of a criminal for me to convey back, that had been made over to our establishment. The Anatomy Bill had not passed then, and we got our subjects as we could, sometimes paying a very high price for them; so that we considered this a very fortunate grant, and one not to be passed by. I was told that the body in question was that of a murderer, who would be executed the next morning for some fatal piece of business which had taken place in a hell at the West End. It is of no use mentioning the name now, for it would do little good, and the affair has long been forgotten; but he was reported to be very well connected, and the whole transaction caused a great sensation at the time.

It was on a dismal evening, towards the close of November, 18—, that I set off from the school on my way to Newgate. A heavy orange-coloured fog, a species of smoke with the jaundice, had settled over the streets, through which the foot-passengers were moving like so many spectres; and the lamps barely cast their light from one to the other, whilst everybody's feet were sliding about on the black greasy pavement, as if they had been climbing up inclined planes of dirty soap. I got a horse and cart from the mews at the back of the school; and taking the laboratory man of the hospital with me, we drove down to the court-yard of the Sessions House. Here I gave up my order, and the body was brought down in a shell, and then placed in the cart; after which we covered it with a tarpaulin, and turned back again on our way home. When we reached the side door of the school we carried in the object of our journey, and then my companion took away the cart, and I prepared to inject the arteries against the next morning.

Getting a subject ready for the dissecting-room was a long job at that time, for cold compositions were not used to fill the vessels, and we had to place the entire body in a bath, and use everything quite hot. I wished to get it finished that night, for our professor of anatomy had taken a new whim into his head, of lecturing at eight o'clock in the morning, to excite habits of industry amongst the students, as he used to say. He never got a good class, and no wonder; who in their senses would ever get up to come to lecture at that time? His general attendants were the regular muffs of the school—men who wore thick shoes, beaver

gloves, and cloth cloaks with curly white stuff at the collars, who took notes of all the lectures, and talked about passing the Hall on Thursday, and the College on the Friday after, without grinding; and the thorough-going second-season, out-and-outers, who had been flaring up all night, and used to come to the school in the morning direct from the wine-rooms, or taverns, or wherever else they had been, and take a nap in the museum, on the stairs by the side of the stove.

However, whether the professor had a good class or not, the subject was always obliged to be ready; and, as he wanted the upper extremities for the next morning, I got to work. I looked out my pipkins and syringes, lighted my copper fire, and was mixing my vermilion and size, with all the rest of it, when I thought I heard a slight tinkle at the door-bell. I wondered who could have any business with me at that time of night; and expecting to find nobody if I went

(for the little boys in the court were mightily fond of ringing and running away again) I kept on with my work. Presently, however, it sounded again, but still very gently. Now, when persons indulge themselves with a runaway pull, they generally make "a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether," more especially if they carry the handle away with them,—a feat easily accomplished by drawing out the knob to its utmost length, and then turning it short down, as can be perfectly testified by the memory of the oldest

inhabitants of Gower Street, and Torrington Square. But this second ring was so quiet that it struck me it might be some old resurrection man come about a body, so I took up the vertebra that I used for a candlestick, and went to the door. How was I astonished to see—not a resurrectionist, not a student slightly elevated, not a pot-boy for the empty pewters which our gentlemen had been drinking their half-and-half from, but a young lady, dressed in a handsome cloak and veil, leaning against the post of the lamp at the door, and crying ready to break her heart. My first idea was that she had come from the dispensary, with a letter for one of the students to attend; and then it struck me all of a sudden, that she was some friend of the poor fellow down stairs; and, as it proved, I was right.

I have seen many beauties in my time, but I never saw such a handsome face as that lady's when she addressed me on opening the door. I am old now and care little for womankind. When dead they are good subjects for show-preparations to put in museums, and that is all: but I have often thought upon her pale, very pale countenance, as she turned to speak. Her complexion was as death-like as that of the corpse below, except that her eyelids were crimsoned with weeping; and her long black hair hung all over her shoulders in heavy waving curls, quite beautiful to look at—none of the flat close bands, which the women wear at present plastered down their cheeks, as if to keep them from falling out.

"Is this the W—— Street School of Medicine?" she asked, in a timid broken voice.

I returned an answer in the affirmative, and ventured to inquire "what she might want there?"

"I will tell you all directly," she replied, still sobbing violently, "but, for God's sake, allow me a few moments' rest, for I am almost dead." And as I opened the door a little wider she entered the passage; and sitting down upon the stairs leading up to the anatomical theatre, burst into a fresh flood of tears.

I closed the door, and stood for a minute or two quite confounded at the appearance of so unusual a visitor. At length she raised her head again, and asked me if I had not brought the body there of the criminal who had been executed at Newgate that morning. I replied that it was now down stairs; still unable to perceive her drift clearly.

"Oh! take me to him!" she exclaimed, rising hurriedly from her seat, and seizing my arm. "Take me to him, I implore you; I ought to go, for I have more right than any one else on earth, although he is a murderer—an executed criminal. I have watched at the prison gates the whole day, in the hopes of tracking his remains through the cold wet streets to their destination, and I followed your cart to this school. You must let me have the body at any price," she added, in a low deep tone. "God knows, I have suffered much for him; I have given up friends, home, reputation, all for his affection; and it has come to this!" And she again began to cry terribly.

In this novel situation, I dont exactly know what I ought to have done—what I *did* I will inform you. "The sight of a female in distress," as the good characters say in minor melo-dramas, quite overcame me,

and I do believe if she had told me to carry the body away myself, on my back through the streets, I should have done it. As it was I took up my light, and half carrying, half leading her down the steep narrow steps that led to the preparation-room of the dead house, I allowed her to enter.

She was the first visitor of the kind, I reckon, that had ever been admitted within its walls; and a strange scene enough the cellar presented, with its quiet lifeless inmate, the weeping lady, and myself. Her youth and beauty formed an odd contrast to the grim and half-dried preparations that hung about, but she saw none of them. Her whole being was centred in one object; and as she threw herself upon the body, which was lying upon a handbier, covered by an old sack, at the end of the room, I thought, what a strange group we should have made for an artist.

"I did not think we should meet again here!" she exclaimed through her tears, as she uncovered the face, and brushed away the sawdust of the coffin, which adhered to the hair, with her small white hand; and then she saw the purple mark round the neck, bearing the impression of every strand of the rope. Poor thing! how she shuddered when she first looked at it. I felt myself in a very awkward situation, and did not very well know what to say or do. My companion, however, spared me the trouble, by demanding, after a short pause, if it were practicable to remove the body from the school; and she accompanied her request by drawing a purse from her reticule, and offering me the whole of its contents to aid her. Now, I declare

honestly, that her distress moved me more than the gold she promised. After a little hesitation—for I knew I was doing wrong—I agreed to let her have it; and I even went myself into the mews, to see if I could get the cart again that had conveyed it to the school. Luckily the man I had engaged was still smoking a short pipe in the harness-room, and I returned with him to the school. We placed the body in another shell, and carried it up-stairs together, the lady directing the man to keep near her as she walked along the pavement.

So ended this singular interview; and I saw no more of her from that day to this. Who she might be I never could find out; but I do not think she was his wife, for there was no wedding-ring on her finger. I found upwards of ten pounds in the purse; and the driver told me that he received two guineas for his trouble, and that he left his charge at some small house on the site of the present buildings at the eastern angle of the Regent's Park, but he did not think he should recollect the precise spot again.

I went that night to the anatomical professor, and told him the whole affair. He grumbled a little at first, and then said I was to get out the preparations of the internal ear for demonstration the next morning —the lecturer's last resource when he has no fresh subject, unless he chooses to send for some sheep's eyes to the nearest butcher's, and exhibit the cornea and crystaline lens—another excellent refuge for the destitute.

CHARADE.

To linger near her lonely bower
As daylight's splendour faded;
To see *his* gift—a gentle flower—
With her fair tresses braided:
To hear her speak—to press her hand—
To watch her dark eyes glancing
A language *he* could understand,
So mute—yet so entrancing!
Was it not bliss? And yet, it seems,
Without *my first* his fairy dreams
And bright anticipations,
Had surely never furnished themes
For poet's meditations.

The vow pronounced, the bridal o'er,
They leave at once old England's shore,
(For people always bolt away
Like culprits, on their wedding day,
As if they were ashamed to stay,)
The steamer's paddles work.
I know not how the craft is call'd,
The *Harlequin* or *Emerald*,
The ill-starr'd *Phœnix*, whose gilt door,
Was picked up somewhere near the Nore,
As well as I can recollect,
The *Antwerp*, that they said was wreck'd,
Batavier or *Grand Turk*.

And they have started for the Rhine,
And *there* their honeymoon will shine,
  But, ere they cross the Channel
The bridegroom 's ill, the bride half dead,
And every other person's head
  Is swath'd in silk or flannel.
And wash-hand basons slide about,—
  Each strives to keep one handy,—
And steward's boys rush in and out
  With biscuits, mops, and brandy.
It pretty safely may be reckon'd,
That everybody is *my second!*

Now for *my whole*—are you so, pray?
And if you are, without delay
Go buy a rope, and take a swing,
Or marry—which is the same thing:
And let the worst come to the worst,
You'll be *my second* of *my first.*

A LITTLE TALK ABOUT SCIENCE AND THE SHOW-FOLKS.

We are, certainly, getting too refined to be jovial; and our increased education is gradually driving out of our hearts what little inclination to honest mirth the altered times have left us. All the sports that made old England "merrie" at that jocund period "once upon a time" are disappearing one by one; and Science has so startled our ancient pastimes, that few have had the good fortune to withstand her march, and assert their ancient powers of attraction for the citizens of London. Nor will they ever rise again; or, if they do, their re-appearance will be in some altered and deeply philosophical form; so that honest old Strutt himself would not recognise those games, whose principles and laws he has so fondly collected and chronicled. The turf of the tilt-yard would be supplanted by wooden blocks and asphalte; the boats of the players at the water-quintain would be propelled by the Archimedes screw, instead of the lusty arms of "the youthe of Finsburie and Chepe:" the marching watch of St. John's Eve in their bright armour, and with their blazing cressets, would give place to a procession of policemen in India-rubber cloaks, bearing a dazzling and bewildering galaxy of Bude lights:

the Yule-log of Christmas would yield to a lump of anthracite coal in a Dr. Arnott's stove, or a Chunk, or a Harper and Joyce, or a Vesta, or some other uncomfortable-looking, black, cheerless substitute for a proper grate fire, of which every one knows half the pleasure is to look at and poke: the simple feats of the gleemen and joculators would be eclipsed by the more astounding illusions of Mr. Bachhoffner at the Polytechnic Institution: the garlands would revolve round the Maypole by voltaic electricity; and the "miracles, mysteries, and moralities" performed on carts during the season of Lent, would be supplanted by travelling lecturers from scientific institutions, in perambulating vans driven by steam, or raised gently from one spot to another by numerous balloons guided by Mr. Green's whirligigs.

We assert, firmly and deliberately, all these things would happen—nay, they will happen; and we are not far from the period of the crisis. The time is fast approaching when our very nurseries will be the schools for science; when our children's first books will be treatises on deeply scientific subjects; and when even their playthings will partake of the change. The Dutch toys will be thrown aside for the Daguerréotype; the doll's house will be a model of the Adelaide Gallery; and the nursery carpets and morning dresses will be burnt full of holes by the acid from the doll's galvanic trough or hydrogen apparatus. Cheap air-pumps will be imported from Holland in chip boxes, with barrels fitted up on the principle of the pop-gun; and dumps will be no longer cast in

pipeclay moulds, but turned out fresh and sharp by the electrotype—another type of the advancing age. Noah's arks will assume the form of chemical-experiment boxes: the beasts and birds will turn to rows of labelled reagents, and Noah and his family, sticks, little round hats and all, will be transformed into test-tubes and spirit lamps. The magic-lantern will be cast aside for the gas microscope; and our old and once-loved friends, the devil and the baker, the tiger that rolls his eyes, and the birds that fly out of the pie, will at last vanish away to nothing in reality, before the magnified attractions of the claws of the *Dytiscus Marginalis*, the wing of the *Libellula*, or the wriggling abominations of a drop of dirty water; of which horrors, collected from standing pools and crammed into the smallest possible quantity of fluid that will allow them room to move, people go away from the exhibition firmly convinced that they allow millions to pass down their *œsophagus* (it used to be called gullet) every time they take a draught of water, and they abandon it in consequence, and stick to Guinness and Whitbread. We do not think that any microscopic exhibitor has yet been rash enough to show what species of monstrous animalculæ is found in a pot of stout or "half-and-half."

Amongst the changes and innovations made by what the advocates of education are pleased to call "an improved state of the mental condition of the people," we regret none more than that which has led to the gradual extinction of our ancient friends, the Mountebanks. We do not mean the peripatetic vendors of

quack medicines—*they* had passed away long before we made our first *début* upon the stage of the minor theatre of our existence; but we allude to the equestrian performers, who formerly pitched their ring, and delighted us for a summer's afternoon with their wonderful feats, on some waste piece of ground in our village. Alas! the waste pieces of ground are no longer to be discovered, for they have been enclosed and built upon; and cottages, teeming with dirty squalid children have supplanted the glittering troop that were accustomed to perform their manœuvres on the same spot.

We well recollect the site of their most favourite *al fresco* theatre, when they paid us a visit. It was a smooth patch of grass, at the end of the village, surrounded by goodly horse-chestnut trees, that formed a pleasant shade from the sun, except where his beams fell in playful and quivering patches upon the arena. Part of this spot was bounded by one of our old abbey walls, and here was the gallery. How lucky did we think ourselves if we could procure a place on this favoured elevation, after clambering up the loose stones and rugged ivy that clung to it, and seat ourselves amidst the crowd of dirty little street boys who swarmed on its summit! And, how well we were enabled to see the performance, without being expected to give anything! We have never felt the same pleasure since; not even in the curtained pigeon-holes of the Opera, or the private boxes of the great theatres. We enjoyed a faint reminiscence of bygone times one night in the gallery at Astley's, but this was far from

our former sensations; for the tawdry ceiling was above us instead of the clear blue summer sky; the escaping gas supplied the place of the sweet country air, and the chirping of the birds in the old chestnut trees was but ill supplied by the occasional catcall of some restless spectator, impatient for the commencement of even an Astley orchestra.

To our juvenile minds the Mountebanks were beings of an elevated and barely comprehensible station. We knew them to be mortal, for they drank beer from

pewter pots during the performances, and put on old great coats, which, tattered and buttonless, certainly partook of our own world,—after any very violent exertions. But then the merryman beat all our most acute conjectures as to his existence. Could he ever have been a baby? We thought not, but rather inclined to the idea that he was some wonderful creation that had dropped ready-made from the clouds, always happy and laughing, and possessing the mysterious power of throwing the same spell over his auditors. An ignorant companion once attempted to make us believe that a sallow-faced and melancholy-looking man whom we saw buying a loaf and a red herring in a

chandler's shop the day after one of the performances was the clown; but we did not credit his statement for an instant. No, no—the merryman would not have bought anything. He would have gone boldly into

the shop, (probably he would have jumped through the door,) and having thrust a butter-firkin on the head of the man who kept it, would have filled his pockets with what he wanted, and then driven them off on a truck of his own impromptu construction, with a flitch of bacon for the body, and cheeses for wheels. We were half convinced that his life was a species of perpetual pantomime; that he threw somersets into bed when he retired for the night, if, indeed, he ever slept; and that he rolled out in the morning with his head between his heels, crowing and laughing as we loved to hear him. The performances usually concluded by a lottery, which was conducted by the master of the ring, and to which a chance of participating in its prizes was obtained by the purchase of shilling tickets. Great inducements were held out to entice the rustics to risk their coin in the venture. A leg of mutton, a small pig — nay, a watch, was sometimes the chief prize; but we noticed that, somewhat singularly, these valuable articles were always gained by some stranger whom nobody knew. No suspicion was, however, excited, and we were perfectly content with the metal pencilcase, the painted tin waiter, or the pair of snuffers, with which the blind goddess favoured us.

If a fair passed over without being attended by a show of any kind, it was a matter of deep concern to us. We believed that the economy of our village must be at a low ebb, and that the agricultural transactions connected with our annual festival could not be carried on with their usual spirit and business, unless a few sights were exhibited, in order to draw

the neighbouring people together for the day. And how we used to look out for the shows the night before the fair! With what joy we received the intelligence that the postman had passed six caravans in the lane between our village and the next town; and with what mysterious importance we communicated the intelligence to our companions! And when they arrived, how we watched their heavy yellow carriages drag up the street, one after another, each drawn by one miserable horse, looking like the industrious flea in the omnibus, compared to the size of the vehicle; with the sometimes additional help of a donkey fastened by old cord to the shafts! We formed a thousand surmises as to their contents, until a strange howl from the interior of one of them betrayed the secret that they were "wild beasts." From that moment there was good-b'ye to anything like staying in-doors. It was no use sending the servants after us, for we eluded their grasp by creeping under the wheels or behind the caravans; and we watched, with the most intense interest, the gradual placing of the large carriages, to form the quadrangle that was to constitute the show of to-morrow.

A "dancing show" was, however, our greatest delight; and hour after hour have we loitered about the progressive elevation of the spars and canvas, until the complete pavilion stood before us. How happy we thought ourselves in being able to pick up the hammer when it fell, and give it to the man on the rickety blue ladder, who was nailing to the front poles a beautiful piece of red festoon, edged with black,

and adorned with round ornaments of thin brass, like the escutcheons of bed-posts! Could it be possible that those dirty people in shirt-sleeves, who were drawing out the long poles from their flat wagon, were the same who would appear on its platform the next day, in flesh-coloured tights and velvet jackets? Was it really the case that the woman in the dingy common shawl, and without a bonnet, returning from the baker's with a stale half-quartern under her arm, would dance outside to-morrow in spangled muslin and satin shoes? —(pipe-clayed, to be sure, but still satin). It was possible, we knew, and yet we scarcely believed it.

It was not until towards the afternoon of our fair that the exhibitions commenced. During the earlier part of the day the show assumed an air of impressive solemnity in its deserted loneliness, with its gaudy draperies moving gravely in the wind. No one was, as yet, on its platform; a boy occasionally crossed the arena with a beer-can; but that was all. There was no further notification of its internal existence; but we knew the preparations must be extensive and important. At last, afternoon came, and with it the show-folks, one after another, up the steps to the front platform. Then we were in our glory; an irresistible attraction bound us to the spot, and all else was forgotten. In vain did the nursery-dinner wait; we had no hunger beyond that which a penny slice of cold plum-pudding, or a mealy-looking pie, could appease; and, hidden by the crowd, we enjoyed the varying performance, hour after hour, sorry when the ominous, "All in to commence" took the actors, for a while,

from our delighted gaze. There was a wild Indian, with a red-ochre face and black legs; a great curtain-ring in his nose, a large club, and a feather cap, like the penny portraits of Mr. H. Wallack, as Rolla, with all his limbs extended, holding a frightened doll on his left shoulder. There was also a countryman, with a great nosegay and striped blue stockings, who was perpetually getting knocked down, and whose appellation appeared to be "Cauliflower;" with three gentlemen, in fancy dresses of every costume on the face of the globe, most ingeniously combined; who waltzed with the three beautiful ladies, except when the music stopped, and then the ladies walked arm-in-arm by themselves, up and down the platform; and Mr. Merryman—dear, foolish, ill-used Mr. Merryman—led the master of the concern, a very fat man, in feathers and a red sash, to the front, and commenced haranguing the crowd after his master's dictation. What roars of laughter arose when he called exhibition *eggs and bacon*, and sport and pastime *pork and parsnips;* and how we wondered if it hurt him when he was whipped. Oh! how delightful it all was!

The interior of the show was equally gratifying. We were told that the outside was always the best; it might have been, but there was a great deal in paying to see the performance, whereas the other was gratis. We well remember its rough benches, formed of planks laid upon tubs; its tottering steps that conducted to the front seats, its hoops of candles, its pole that intercepted the view in the middle; and its coarsely-painted scenery—then far beyond the choicest

of Stanfield's dioramas, as specimens of art, at least to our eyes. Sometimes the performance was conjuring; and sometimes it was a play, with a comic song between (sung by the countryman) whose chorus was always "Ri tit fol iddledy, tit fol iddledy, tiddledy heigh gee boo;" or, occasionally, a young lady danced a hornpipe on a little piece of board, laid down for the purpose, after which she made a collection of pence; the Pantaloon, who played the drum and pandæan pipes, informing the company, "it was all she had for her own perquisite to buy trinkets with;" the said "trinkets" meaning bread and cheese, and yellow soap. Commonplace and spiritless the performance doubtless was, but it was sufficiently attractive to make us keenly regret when it was over. We could scarcely conceive that the ground where such feats took place was part of our common market-place; and yet, there stood the old post in a corner of the show, that we knew so well; and long after the exhibition had departed we could trace the sawdust parallelogram that marked its former site, as we stood with much gratification on the spot which we knew had formed the mysterious *coulisses*.

The minor shows, of dwarfs, and giants, and white-haired Negresses, were also very engaging; although they had not the imposing air of the dancing shows. Their pictures were, however, sufficiently wonderful; and we were often disappointed at not finding the Turks and officers, and gentlemen and ladies, inside the caravan, who were painted outside as spectators of the exhibition. How we speculated as to the nature

of the curiosities which the chintz drapery, stretched across the end of the show, veiled from our view! How portably, also, were the domestic interiors of these moving houses arranged! The small brass fire-place in the corner, that always smoked; the seats round the sides, formed of lockers; the trap-door in the roof, to admit air, or rather, we should say, to let it out: and the two windows with the gaudy shutters. Our chief desire, at that time, would have been to have lived in one of those perambulating residences, and travelled about wherever we liked.

Even the humble peep-shows were not without enjoying a share of our patronage; and we listened with the most juvenile credulity to the exhibitor's descriptions, as we stood behind the green-baize curtain, on the little low form that raised our eyes to a level with the wondrous lenses. At the time we write of, Mr. Weare's murder furnished abundant material for these migrating dioramas; and we perfectly recollect the series of peep-show views that the event gave birth to. The murder in Gill's-hill-lane; the pond at Elstree, where the body was found; the stable-yard of Probert's cottage; and the interior of the Crown court at Hertford; were all vividly impressed on our imagination; and even now we can picture them as if we had but seen them yesterday.

When the Mountebanks disappeared our greatest juvenile pleasure went with them. For months afterwards we looked with no common interest and veneration upon the scene of their performances, where the horses' feet had cut up a circle on the turf, and the

holes in the ground which the stakes had made that enclosed the ring, seemed the links which bound us to our former pleasures.

At length, a summer passed away and the Mountebanks came not. We never saw them again. We thought we once recognised the merryman at Hampton races, and we grieved that he had descended to what we deemed the illegitimate drama. The piece of ground was dug and planted with potatoes; subsequently it became a timber-yard, where the very trees were cut up that formerly enclosed it; and there is now some talk in our parish of purchasing the lease of the ground and erecting a Literary and Scientific Institution thereon by subscription, to distribute philosophical knowledge amongst the inhabitants of the village at a cheap rate, and to form a class for acquiring a perfect understanding of the properties of polarized light, crystalography, and the condensation of carbonic acid gas.

Increasing years have changed our disposition, and shows and mountebanks have now lost their attractions. The joyous medium of childhood, through which we viewed their motley wonders, has been drawn aside, and we can only now look on them in the most literal and commonplace sense. Still, for the sake of old association, we sometimes pay a visit to them; and if a laugh is provoked by some absurdity that would formerly have excited astonishment; if we see, in the little people around us, something of the same delight which we once cordially entered into, surely our end is more than answered.

DELIGHTFUL PEOPLE.

THERE are two sets of people in society—the amusers and the amused, who are both equally useful in their way, although widely different in their attributes. A *réunion*, to go off well, should contain a proper share of either class; because, notwithstanding the inability of the latter to contribute much to the festivity of the meeting, they make an excellent and patient audience, without which the powers of the amusers are cramped, and they feel they are not sufficiently appreciated.

Why all people, enjoying the same level of intellect, should not be equally sought after in society we do not pretend to decide; but we will endeavour to account for it by falling back upon our theatrical analogies. If you study the playbills, you see, year after year, the same names amongst the companies who keep at the same humble standard; whilst others, whom you recollect as their inferiors, ultimately arrive at big letters and benefits—in fact, that chance, tact, *forte*, and opportunity, come spontaneously to the latter, whilst the former are content to remain servants and peasants. They have been known to embody guests and mobs, and have sometimes arrived at first

citizens; but this is by no means a common occurrence. The same union of circumstances that divides a theatrical commonwealth into stars and supernumeraries, produces in our own circles delightful people and nobodies—for so are the listeners and admirers generally and uncourteously termed.

But there are various kinds of delightful people beyond the mere entertainers. If there is a family rather higher in life than yourselves, or moving in a sphere you think more of than your own, notwithstanding they may have formerly *snubbed* you, it is astonishing, when you get introduced to them, and at last asked to their house, what delightful people you find them. If you know two young persons who have tumbled into an engagement with one another under tolerably favourable circumstances, and visit each other's friends for the first time, you will be enchanted with the accounts of what "delightful people" they are; how *very* friendly the mother was, and how well the sisters played, and made coloured-paper dust-collectors. Persons who have large houses, give dinners, and keep carriages and private boxes—gentlemen who have been all along the coast of the Mediterranean, and tell most extraordinary anecdotes until they themselves really believe that their adventures have happened—authors who have written a book which has proved a hit by chance, to the astonishment of everybody, and no one more than the writers—acquaintances who have the happy knack of cordially agreeing with you upon every subject, and applauding everything you do, thinking quite differently all the while

—worn-out "bits of quality tumbled into decay," as Miss Lucretia M'Tab says, who honour families of questionable *caste* with their acquaintance, and join all their parties by the tenour of relating stories of by-gone greatness, and random recollections of defunct high circles; all these, and many more, had we time to enumerate them, are "delightful people." But we proceed to consider the class it is our wish to place more especially under the inspection of the reader.

We called one day upon a lady of our acquaintance, who was about to give a large evening party; and upon being ushered into the drawing-room, found the whole family in high glee at the contents of a note they had just received. Our intimacy prompted us to

inquire the purport of the oblong billet that had so much delighted them.

"Oh!" said Ellen, the eldest daughter, "the Lawsons have accepted—all of them are coming!"

"And who are the Lawsons?" we ventured to ask.

"My goodness, Albert!" exclaimed everybody at once, with an excitement which nearly caused us, being of a nervous temperament, to tilt backwards off the apology for a chair on which we were seated—one of

those slim ricketty specimens of upholstery, which inspire stout gentlemen with such nervous dread, when one is handed to them. "Is it possible you don't know the Lawsons?"

We confessed with shame our ignorance of the parties in question.

"They are such *delightful people*," continued the second female olive-branch, Margaret. "We were so afraid they would not come, because they are almost always engaged; so we sent their invitation nearly a month ago."

"And you have only just received their reply?" we subjoined. "It looks as if they had waited for something else that didn't come."

"Oh, no," said Ellen, almost offended. "Mrs. Lawson is always *so* charmed with everything at our house, and says our parties are always *so* pleasant, and that we manage things *so* well."

"And she told me, the last time she was here," added Margaret, "that she could not have believed the whole of the supper was made at home, if she had not been told. And I am sure she liked it, because she ate so much."

"And what does this family do to make them so delightful?" we inquired.

"Oh, almost everything," said Ellen. "Mr. Lawson plays an admirable rubber, and Mrs. Lawson knows nearly all the great people of the day, and can tell a great deal of their private histories. Bessy is a perfect Mrs. Anderson on the piano, and Cynthia—"

"Who?" we interrupted, somewhat rudely.

"Cynthia—isn't it a pretty name? She is such a delightful girl—sings better than any one you ever heard in private."

"Then, Tom is such an oddity, and such a nice fellow," continued Margaret. "He imitates Macready and Buckstone, so that you would not know the difference, and sings the drollest songs! He can whistle just like a bird, play tunes upon a stick, and conjure with rout-cakes at supper."

"And you should hear him do the two cats, where he makes you believe that they talk real words!" chimed in Ellen.

"And what is this wonder?" we asked.

"He's a lawyer," said Ellen; "but I don't think he much likes his profession."

We thought so too. No man who did the two cats, or imitated Macready and Buckstone, ever did like his profession, unless he was an actor at once.

"You will see them here on Friday," said Margaret, "and then you can form your own opinions; but I am certain you will like them. Hark! there's a double knock at the door."

"Don't peep at the window, Margaret; they will see you," said Ellen to her sister, who was endeavouring to discover who the visitors were by taking a covert observation through the bars of a birdcage.

"It's those horrid Wiltons!" exclaimed Margaret. "Do ring again, Ellen. What a singular thing it is servants are never in the way when a double knock comes at the door."

The new-comers entered the room, and at the same time we left: not, however, before our fair young

friends had told "those horrid Wiltons" how angry they were with them for not calling more frequently, and how delighted they felt now they had come at last. We were sorry to find their pretty lips could let out such little falsehoods, and with such excellent grace.

Friday evening arrived, as in the common course of things every Friday evening must do if you wait for it; and about ten o'clock, after a shilling's-worth of shake, rattle, and altercation, we alighted from a cab at our friends' house, and tripped into the library, where tea and coffee was going on, with a lightness that only dress boots and white kids can inspire. Several visitors were there before us, as well as one of Margaret's brothers, who said, in a low voice, as we entered—

"My dear friend, let me introduce you to some delightful people. Mrs. Lawson, allow me to present to you Mr. ——"

"Will you take tea or coffee, sir?" said the maid, at the same time.

We were so overcome with being thus suddenly confronted with the stars, that we think we bowed to the maid, and said we were happy to make her acquaintance; and merely exclaimed, "Coffee, if you please," as Mrs. Lawson inclined her head to ourselves.

We went up stairs, and entered the ball-room, where our friends had just received intelligence that "the Lawsons had arrived!"

The first portion of a party is always the same.

And it was not until the evening was somewhat advanced, and they had made sure that everybody was arrived, that the powers of the Lawsons came into full play,—at least, as regarded the young people; for the governor had been at whist ever since he first arrived, and Mrs. Lawson's feathers were ubiquitously perceptible, waving and bending apparently in every part of the room at once; talking to all the old ladies in turn, fishing for compliments for her own daughters by admiring theirs, and smiling, with angelic benignity, upon every young man concerning whose expectations she had been agreeably informed. The junior exhibition commenced by Bessy delighting the company with a rondo by Hertz, in the most approved skyrocket style of that great master; being a Parisian composition, introducing variations upon the popular airs, "*Rien, mes bons enfans, allez toujours,*" "*La Pierre de Newgate,*" and "*Joli Nez,*" from the opera of *Jacque Sheppard.* As it was not above twenty pages in length, every one was quite charmed,—indeed, they could almost have heard it again; and the manner in which Miss Lawson sprung at the keys, and darted up and down the flats and sharps, and twitched her shoulders, and tickled the piano into convulsions, and jerked about upon the music-stool, was really astonishing, and thunderstruck everybody; except the young lady and gentleman who were flirting at the end of the room after a waltz, and actually appeared more engaged with their own conversation than they did with

Musical Gymnastics.

the fair Bessy's performance, which at last concluded amidst universal applause.

There was another quadrille, and then we were informed that Miss Cynthia Lawson was going to sing. The young lady was dressed in plain white robes, with her hair smoothed very flat round her head *à la Grisi*, whom she thought she resembled both in style of singing and features, and consequently studied all her attitudes from the clever Italian's impersonation of Norma. Of course, there was the usual delay attendant upon such displays. The musicians had to be cleared away from the piano, in which process their

wine-bottle was knocked over; then the music was in a portfolio, in the room down stairs, which nobody could find; when found, it was all placed on the music-rest topsy-turvy; and many other annoyances. At last, the lady began a bravura, upon such a high note, and so powerful, that some impudent fellows in the square, who were passing at the time, sang out,

"Vari-e-ty!" in reply. Presently, a young gentleman, who was standing at her side, chanced to turn over too soon, whereupon she gave him *such* a look, that, if he had entertained any thoughts of proposing,

would effectually have stopped any such rash proceeding; but her equanimity was soon restored, and she went through the aria in most dashing style, until she came to the last note, whose appearance she heralded with a roulade of wonderful execution.

"Now, don't get up," said the lady of the house, in a most persuasive and winning manner, to Miss Cynthia, when she had really concluded. "*Do* favour us with one more, if you are not too fatigued. Or, perhaps you would like a glass of wine first—a very, very little glass."

The young lady declined any refreshment, and immediately commenced a duet with her brother, whose voice, however, she entirely drowned; nevertheless, the audience were equally delighted, and as soon as she had regularly concluded, and the murmur of approbation had ceased, six young men rushed up to Ellen, with the request that they might be introduced to Miss Lawson for the next waltz. But, unfortunately, Miss Lawson did not waltz, or rather she did not choose to do so. She was aware of her liability to be called upon to sing after every dance, and she had no notion of sitting down to the instrument with a red face and flustered *ensemble*.

"Delightful people, those Lawsons!" wheezed out a fat old gentleman in pumps and a white neckcloth, who was leaning against the wall, and looking as if he wanted a glass of ale.

"Do you know them, sir?" we asked.

"Never had the pleasure of meeting them before, but they are a charming family. Mother, a delightful

person, sir—woman of the world—appears to have been thrown early into good society, and profited by it. Clever fellow that young Lawson—ha! ha!—

look at him!" And the old gentleman chuckled until he was almost choked.

We turned to gaze at the cause of his mirth, and saw Tom doing Pastorale in a most ballet-like style, jumping up and coming down upon one toe, turning round without touching the ground, and making everybody afraid of coming within a yard of him.

There are many worse periods in our existence than the twenty minutes consumed at supper at an evening party. The reserve which prevailed at the commencement of the evening begins to wear off; you gain courage to make engagements for the first quadrille after supper, and think what a pity it is that the flight of Time cannot be delayed by pleasure, with permission to make up his lost moments by hurrying doubly quick over periods of sorrow or *ennui*. Alas!

the hoary old mower generally takes it into his head to act in precisely an opposite manner.

We went down to supper with a pretty specimen of feminine mortality in white poplin on our arm, and assisted her to a cubic inch of blancmange, and an homœopathic quantity of Moselle, which she affirmed was quite sufficient; as well as took the precaution to

push the tongue to the other side of the table, opposite a man who had taken off his gloves to eat, and who was immediately "troubled for a slice" fifteen times in rapid succession. By the way, talking of taking off your gloves—what is the reason that, whenever you go out, and wish your hands to look more than ordinarily white, they generally resemble raw beefsteaks?

Our *devoirs* being for the time accomplished, we looked round the room, and the first object that caught our eye between the lines of wax-candles and trifle-dishes was Mrs. Lawson's turban, with herself attached to it, bobbing about at the head of the table, in most graceful affability to everybody. Miss Lawson was

flirting with a slim young man at the sideboard, where she preferred to sup, on the pretence of not being able to find a seat; and Miss Cynthia, no doubt much fatigued by her vocal exertions, was concluding the second patty, and thinking what she should send her *cavalier servante* for next. Tom was in the centre of the table, in high glee, chirping at a sugar-plum bird in a barley-sugar cage, jerking bonbons into his mouth by slapping his hand, making little men out of raisins and preserved ginger, and sending them to different young ladies, with his compliments; playing the cornet-à-piston upon a wafer-cake, "and many other performances too numerous to mention," as they say outside shows.

"My dear Mrs. Howard," said Mrs. Lawson to the hostess, "how delicious everything is! You always do have such very fine lobsters—where *do* you contrive to get them?"

"I am very happy you admire them," returned the lady, "but I really don't know." Which affirmation was the more singular, as she had ordered them herself from a shop in Wigmore-street.

"Lady Mary Abbeville and yourself are the only two of my friends who contrive to get large lobsters," continued Mrs. Lawson. "Lady Mary is a charming creature—do you know her?"

"I have not that pleasure," replied our friend; "and yet I have heard the name somewhere."

"Between Boulogne and Paris," cried Tom, as he exploded a cracker bonbon. "The diligence dines there."

"Now, my dear Tom, do not be so foolish," said Mrs. Lawson, in a tone of admiring reproach. "How can a diligence dine?"

"Well, I've seen it *break-fast*, however, when it has been going down a hill over-loaded," replied the "talented" son. "A glass of wine, sir?" he continued, pitching upon some one opposite by chance, to make his wit appear off-hand.

The challenged individual was an overgrown young gentleman, with a very high shirt-collar. He stammered out, "With much pleasure!" and then filling up his half glass of sherry from the nearest decanter at hand, which contained port, he made a nervous bow, and swallowed the wine as if it had been physic.

"Here 's you and I, sir, and two more; but we won't tell their names," exclaimed Tom, winking to the young gentleman, whose blushes increased to a fearful pitch of intensity.

The ladies had been gradually leaving the room for the last ten minutes, and when they had all departed we sat down to our own supper. Tom never once flagged in his drolleries. He laughed, took wine with all the old gentlemen, did the two cats, imitated Macready and Buckstone—in fact, opened all his stores of facetiousness. He accompanied us up-stairs, and after the ladies had finished the long quadrille they were having with themselves, he sang a song about "Wanted" a something, but we do not exactly recollect what; being ourselves engaged in talking delightful absurdities to the belle in the white poplin, and endeavouring to reason down the antediluvian idea

she had formed, that it was improper to waltz with any one else but her brother; in which argument we finally succeeded. However, the song was eminently successful, and threw everybody who witnessed the odd grimaces with which Tom accompanied it into delirious convulsions of laughter.

The "delightful people" left about half-past two; Mrs. Lawson declaring her girls went out so much that their health began to suffer from late hours. Tom saw them into their carriage, and then came back, pressing every other young man in the room to come to some tavern where there was a capital comic singer; but finding no one so inclined, he also took his leave. We waited until we saw the man who played the piano hammering away with his eyes shut, and gradually going to sleep over the keys, when we thought it time to depart ourselves; and in all the happiness of a latch-key in our pocket, and the same good hat we left in the hall upon our head, we bent our steps homeward.

Two or three weeks passed away, when one morning we received an application from a young medical friend, to use our interest in obtaining for him some votes for the situation of surgeon to a dispensary in the neighbourhood, accompanied by a list of the governors. We obtained two or three promises, and at last determined to solicit Mr. Lawson, whose name we saw in the list: at the same time, we must confess that we were not a little anxious to see the "delightful people" at home—to track these lions to their own lair, and watch their natural instincts. We ac-

cordingly sallied forth, one fine day, in all the pride of unexceptionable boots and faultless gloves, and arriving at the family mansion, knocked at the door. A footman in his shirtsleeves ran out into the area, and having looked at us, ran back again; appearing the next minute at the door, with one arm still forcing its way down the sleeve of his coat. We found the Lawsons were at home, and were shown into the drawing-room, with the assurance from the servant that his mistress would be there directly. After looking over the card-basket, to see whom they knew, (which is one of our favourite employments when we are left to ourselves in a strange house,) we turned over the leaves of some albums that were lying about in company with some theological works, which, being an enemy to religious display, we thought far better suited for the closet than the drawing-room table; and in which occupation we were interrupted by the sound of voices in angry dialogue below. This was suddenly cut short by the slamming of a door, and immediately afterwards Mrs. Lawson entered the room, looking a little red and excited, but all smiles and condescension; begging we would be seated, and telling us how very happy she was that we had called upon her.

After a few common-place observations and inquiries about the weather, the health of the family, the party we had lately met, and such-like exciting topics of conversation, Mrs. Lawson informed us her family were at luncheon, and begged we would join them. A strong smell of roast mutton greeted us as we descended to

the dining-room, and tempted us to think that it was an early dinner. We expected to have been kept in a state of unceasing laughter throughout the whole meal, but were very much mistaken. We had not anticipated any immense fun from the papa Lawson, who was quietly enough discussing some bread and cheese; but, as the facetious Tom was there, and his gifted sisters, we calculated upon a repetition, in a certain degree, of their previous amusing powers. There was, however, nothing of the kind; the whole party were as flat as the jug of beer that has been left out for supper, covered with a cheese-plate, on returning from the play. Bessy had evidently been quarreling with her sister; Cynthia contradicted her mother on every point or affirmation that Mrs. Lawson uttered; Tom sat back in his chair, with his hands in his pocket, and his legs stretched out straight under the table; and the good lady herself kept up such an alternation of smiles to us and black looks to the young people, that her command of countenance was perfectly marvellous. At first, we thought it probable that they were all recovering from influenza; but they looked so very healthy that we soon relinquished that opinion. They were, however, so very quiet that when they retired, and we had mentioned the object of our visit to Mr. Lawson, who was a sensible man, (if the others had let him alone,) we summoned up courage to say that we feared we had intruded during some family discussion.

"My dear sir," he replied, "we never have anything else but family discussions here. I dare say

you are surprised to see them so different from what they are in company; but the more they *show off* when they are out, the more cross they always are at home the next day."

In these few words was contained the whole history of "delightful people"—the melancholy truth, that those who in society carry all before them by their spirits and acquirements are, at home, the most uncomfortable beings upon the face of the earth, because they cannot there find the very excitement which is almost necessary to their existence.

We have met the Lawsons several times since, and we have begun to find that their attractions sadly want variety. Mrs. Lawson tells the same anecdotes, Bessy plays the same fantasias, Cynthia warbles the identical *arias* we last heard, and Tom has a certain routine of tricks and absurdities, which he plays off in regular order during the evening. We begin to weary of these lions; although, at every *réunion* where it is our lot to meet them, there are the same number of guests charmed at their talents, who never hesitate to pronounce them most "delightful people."

THE BUREAU DRAWER.

Amongst all the relics of furniture, of a time gone by, which that tyrant, Fashion, in spite of her taste for the *renaissance*, does not allow to hold the same station in her boudoir as formerly, is the old bureau. Well do we remember the respect in which we held this antique pile of drawers and pigeon-holes, and gilt handles, when we were in childhood. Our bureau stood in the corner of our bed-room; it was of walnut-tree wood, and contained six long shallow drawers in its front; with a large flap at top, that turned over upon two supports, which were pulled out, as occasion required, to form a sort of secretary. And what a source of amusement did it then disclose to our infantile gaze; for, when we first recollect it, we were little enough to sit on its leaf without overbalancing it, and so inspect its compartments at leisure. What rows of small drawers, and miniature closets over them; with tiny doors panelled with old looking-glass, and developing more shelves and secret recesses within, with locks to every division, ornamented with large tarnished 'scutcheons of brass and gilt scroll-work. We knew its contents by heart, but we never tired of inspecting them. Some of the drawers were full of bugles and spangles, that had helped to brighten the

ball-dresses of our ancestors. Others contained old books in glossy harlequin bindings, illustrated by coarse wood-cuts, brown with age; and through some of them the worm had eaten a tunnel that went from beginning to end, leaving a small round hole in every page.

There were old lockets in some of the little closets, of plain and antique make, enclosing morsels of hair of various shades and in different forms, but no one could tell to whom they had belonged. They had been there many, many years, long before grandpapa was a little boy; for he had played with them when young, in the same manner as we then did, and they were ancient even in his boyhood. And yet these old lockets had at some time been objects of interest to their possessors. Tales of broken hearts and crushed hopes, poignant and severe at the time, might have been connected with their being; and sad farewells and vain remorse, with tear-bringing recollections of the lost and loved, might have woven their gloomy chain around those mute appealers to the memory; but their owners had died long since; the very stone on their graves had become worn and broken, and the inscriptions of their names were no longer visible, even if the long, coarse grass that overshadowed them had been cleared away. We did not join in the laugh at these tokens of former love, when we saw their quaint forms and devices; we returned them to their depository with silent respect, as we thought that, many years hence, similar trifles of our own might perchance call forth an idle smile, when all had passed

away but the recollection of the old man who had left these love-gages, of apparently such small value, behind him.

Some other of the recesses contained curious shells, old whist-markers, and foreign beads of gaudy colours; and in the pigeon-holes were bundles of aged and half-legible letters, whose seals were quite flat and blank with pressure, or crumbling with antiquity. The great drawers in front were kept locked; but we remember to have peeped into them once, and seen a quantity of ancient wearing apparel, of faded and rustling silk, mingled with fragments of broad dingy lace, and odd pieces of flowered and quilted satin, like old gentlemen's dressing-gowns in sentimental comedies. Altogether, we looked upon our old friend with mixed feelings of awe and affection; and when we began to store our own collections in its recesses, it assumed a value and importance in our eyes, fit for the guardian of such treasures.

Time passed on; we grew up, and went abroad in the world. The romance of life commenced, and our mind and sentiments changed under the influence of its vicissitudes. We began to think of childhood as a by-gone dream—the bright and happy vision of summer skies, and field-flowers, and butterflies, that only infancy can picture; and we mused, with half-pleasureable, half-melancholy retrospection, over the days when we played with the shells and spangles on the flap of the old bureau.

When we returned home again our old friend was gone. The family had increased, and more room was

required in the house; the more cumbrous portion of the furniture was condemned to the appraiser, and the bureau was carried away in his van, and soon forgotten by all except ourselves. Still we lamented its departure; and determined, if ever we came across an article of similar make, to purchase it, and consign it to our own room, were it only to awaken old associations. Fortunately for our intentions, we one day saw a counterpart of our lost treasury amongst some broken and imperfect furniture at a second-hand shop in the neighbourhood. The price was moderate, and we paid for it directly, nor would we wait to have it cleaned before it was brought home; we kept that pleasure for ourselves. In routing out the dust and cobwebs from its drawers and closets we discovered in one of them, a bundle of papers, tied together with some bobbin. We were about to commit them to the flames, when a few words caught our attention, and induced us to look over the rest. A strange collection of letters, papers, &c., indeed, they proved; put together without the least regard to order or subject. We conceived, and with some plausibility, that the piece of furniture had belonged to the editor of a periodical, and that these various documents were contributions from different hands. Such as they are we now present them to the reader.

I.

MASTER PETER DODDLE TO HIS PARENTS.

(*Very nicely written in small-hand.*)

MY DEAR PARENTS,

I have written to inform you that our Midsummer recess commences on Wednesday, June 17; and our vacation will terminate on Friday, July 24th. I trust you will find I have made creditable progress in the various branches of study I have pursued during the past half-year. Anticipating much pleasure in meeting you, believe me to remain,

My dear Parents,

Your affectionate son,

PETER DODDLE.

Apsley House Academy,
Peckham.

[Over-leaf, in another hand, and apparently much hurried:

Dear mother old Fuzzyscratch has gone Out of the

Room and I write this on the sly I writ the other fourteen Times Before the writing master let it Go and now he has Put all new Capitals in and painted every letter all Over I didn't make it up as we all writ the Same which was chalked by Mr. Splitnib on the black Board and we copied it except the orphans who didn't Write holiday letters at All please I want a new Pair of trowsers by when I come home as These are all in strips and no Buttons because the boys have cribbed the moulds out Of them to make teetotums to spin on their slates and I tie them up With string which cuts my shoulders and please all my socks are wore out and my shoes havn't no soles which Lets in water and Young monk took the crown of my hat to make a target and then Borowed my watch to Turn into a steam engine which didn't do and now he can't put it Together again because he 's lost some wheels which he says Won't hinder its going At all I havn't got any money and Owe ninepence So I think I had better borrow some of Wimples Because he isn't coming back again after the holidays unless you Send me some so no more at Present from your dutiful son Peter doddle.

II.

POETRY FOR A YOUNG LADY'S ALBUM,

To be headed by an oriental tinting of an impossible butterfly, with crooked horns and triangular wings,

hovering over a blue rose; with some very foreign shells and sea-weed in the distance, like miniature pickled cabbage. On the opposite side, two drawings, in the middle of perforated cards, of the Bridge of Sighs, and the Fishing Temple at Virginia Water.

The cloudless ecstasy of pleasure,
Floating o'er memory's sunlit sea,
On other harps may tune its measure;
Alas! it yields no life to me.

For my mind's odour has departed,
By beaming misery too compress'd,
And left remembrance broken-hearted
In the dead caverns of my breast.

No—I must live and laugh and scorn
The crowds that fling their spell around me;
Awaiting but sad joy's gay morn,
To burst the flimsy web that bound me.

I leave thee—o'er the world a rover,
False one! we ne'er may meet again;
Yet, if I get my business over,
I may return by the next train,

And blast thee with my scorching eye,
And palsied hand, and frenzied tone;
Then, with the hate of agony,
Leave your dim grief to burn alone.

ADONAIS.

III.

An antique-looking paper, possibly intended for No. 636 of *The Spectator*, if a ninth volume had been published.

Nihil est, juvenes; tolerate labores.—PROPERT.
Nix my dolly pals, fake away.—AINSWORTH.

DEAR SPEC.

I am a young man of good connexions, and I love, and am beloved by a young lady of surpassing beauty and moral excellence, but we have neither of us much money. Our allowance is sufficient for us each at present, but we wish to know your opinion as to its being adequate if we marry.

Yours very faithfully,
RALPH RASHTOP.

Keep single as you are. It is much better to pine for love than for want of something to eat; and although the little blind god is all very delightful in his way, he cannot make a beef-steak pudding, or put potatoes under a shoulder of mutton, unless you find the materials. Notwithstanding you imagine you can both live upon nothing at all beyond each other's society, you will be sadly deceived if you try; and recollect you *may* get tired even of that. Do not

reckon too much upon the clean hearth and tea-kettle anticipations of marriage: but picture more strongly a dull wet Sunday in a back parlour, six years hence, when you know each other's faces by heart, and increasing embarrassments are rising around you. There are few young men who fully weigh the giving up of the thousand bachelor pleasures, which must take place if they marry. They expect to lead the life of Leoni and Juliette at Venice, instead of the steady *ménage* of Madame de Wolmar and her sober spouse, in Switzerland. Possession cloys, and they get peevish and irritable on discovering their mistake. Look about you for ten years more, and then you may write to me again. In the mean time flirt and chat with every pretty girl you like, but never come to pen and ink; you may be asked your intentions, and unavoidably tumble into an engagement.

IV.

AN ACT FOR

amending the Representation of certain Public Sights, termed Equestrian Spectacles, in the habit of being represented at a favourite place of resort, termed the Royal Amphitheatre, Westminster Bridge.

WHEREAS it has been the custom of divers

ladies and gentlemen, young ladies and young gentlemen, maid-servants, apprentices, and little boys, to assemble night after night, between Easter Monday and a period in the autumn not fixed, in various different parts of the Royal Amphitheatre, according to the state of their pockets, then and there to behold divers gorgeous pageants and feats of horsemanship, known under the name of Equestrian Spectacles;

And whereas although much delight is still experienced by the aforesaid apprentices and little boys, at the splendour of the pageant and humours of the arena, yet to the children of a larger growth, who have been there before, much takes place that they had previously seen, heard, or expected to see or hear, insomuch that they can sometimes anticipate what is coming, to the detriment of that illusion and enjoyment which they ought to receive, after having separately and severally paid "Boxes 4s. Pit 2s. Gallery 1s. Doors open at half-past five, and commence at half-past six precisely. *Vivat Regina.*"

May it therefore please your Majesty, that it may be enacted; And be it enacted that henceforth no person, on taking front places for the boxes in the morning, be allowed to run up the half-dozen stairs beyond the box-office, and from the lobby to behold the Flying Devil of Chinese America practising his astounding performances by daylight, in the circus, in his shirt-sleeves and lace-up boots; and that when the evening arrives, no person having thus taken front places, presume to wish to go out for ginger-beer or oysters between the acts, to the annoyance of the

nine rows of audience behind him, and the especial discomfiture of the fat old gentleman with the child on his knees, who sits on the flap-seat by the box-door.

And be it further enacted that no three gentlemen, going together to the boxes, shall push at the box-door in an unseemly manner, for fear of being the last to enter, and consequently, the one who will be expected to buy a bill for a shilling of the box-keeper; save and except they have made arrangements on their journey as to who shall thus pay, by the process of throwing a small coin in the air, speculating on its obverse and reverse as it descends.

And be it further enacted that in the bills of performance, such terms as "Double Platforms!" "Triple Stud of Enchanted Steeds!!" "Tartar Horde of the Untamed Horse of the Wilderness!!!" "Triumphal Chariot of the Conquered Oracle!!!!" "Splendid Banquet of the Lion-tamer of the Deserts!!!!!" and the like, be studiously avoided and omitted; as calculated to intimidate people of weak nerves and moderate capabilities of understanding, and entirely to muddle what little intellect nature had allowed them, with a sense of overwhelming vastness. And that in the performances themselves, such characters as haughty tyrants, rash beardless boys, injured rightful heirs, young ladies in love with one man, in a tin helmet, and forced to marry another in a tiger-skin sort of Mackintosh cape, and comic cowardly soldiers in armour too big for them, always siding with the winning

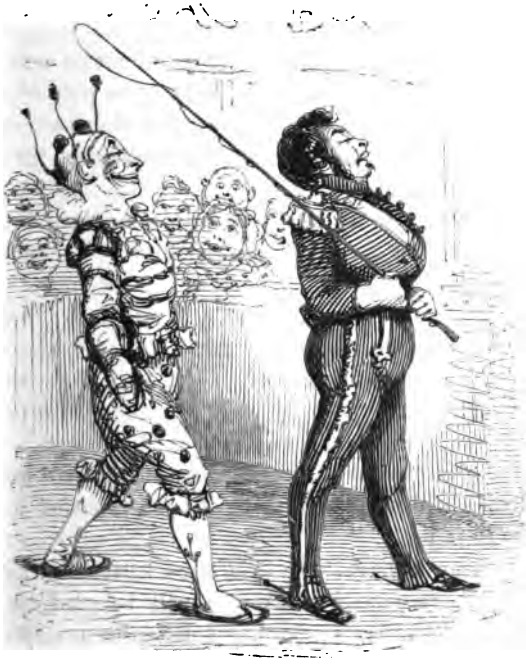
party, be hereafter abolished; and that such speeches as "Can I believe my eyes?" "It is as I suspected—all is still, and the tyrant slumbers;" "No, it isn't—yes it is—oh, yes, my heart tells me too, too well it is my Afghar's silver trumpet's sound," be totally omitted. And that, in the terrific combats on narrow bridges, the retreating party shall not keep looking down behind him to avoid tumbling off the plank upon the man who turns the cascade below; nor shall

the horse soldiers, whose trowsers are too long for them, hitch them up when they dismount, in the manner of ladies crossing Oxford Street on a muddy day.

And be it further enacted, that, in processions, no person therein assisting shall run round the scene and appear twice; nor shall the trumpeters, as soon as they get behind the wings, slip off their tabards, lay down their instruments, and, enveloped in white robes, march on again as conquered Arabs; nor shall the men who carry the banners always keep one side to the audience, whichever way they themselves may turn; nor shall each English sailor, in a naval spectacle, fight and conquer more than a dozen of the besieged natives at once.

And be it further enacted, that when the scenes in the circus commence, the Merriman, Grotesque, or Clown, shall not, after the first equestrian feat, exclaim "Now I 'll have a turn to myself," previous to his toppling like a coach-wheel round the ring; nor shall he fall flat on his face, and then collecting some sawdust in his hand, drop it down from the level of his head, and say his nose bleeds; nor shall he attempt to make the rope-dancer's balance-pole stand on its end by propping it up with the said sawdust: nor shall he after chalking the performer's shoes, conclude by chalking his own nose, to prevent his foot from slipping when he treads on it; nor shall he take long pieces of striped cloth and hold them up for Mr. Stickney to jump over, whilst his horse goes under; previous to which he shall not pull the groom off the

stool, who holds the other end of the said cloth; neither shall he find any difficulty in holding it at its proper level; nor after having moved it higher and lower, shall he ask, "Will that do?" and on being answered in the affirmative, he shall not jump down and put his hands in his pockets, saying "I 'm glad of it;" nor shall he pick up a small piece of straw for fear he should fall over it, and afterwards balance the said straw on his chin as he runs about. Neither shall the Master of the Ring say to the Merriman,



Grotesque, or Clown, when they are leaving the circus, "I never follow the fool, sir;" nor shall the fool reply, "Then I do," and walk out after him; nor, moreover, shall the Clown say that "the horses are as clever as the barber who shaved bald magpies at twopence a dozen;" nor tell the groom in the red jacket and top boots, when he takes the said horses away, "to rub them well down with cabbage-pudding, for fear they should get the collywobbleums in their pandenoodles;" such speeches being manifestly very absurd and incomprehensible.

Saving always that the divers ladies and gentlemen, young ladies and young gentlemen, maid-servants, apprentices, and little boys who patronize the theatre should see no reason why the above alterations should be made; under which circumstances, they had better remain as they are.

[It is hoped that this Act will come into force as soon as the new theatre is finished.]

V.

MRS. RAMSBOTTOM.

[A letter from that indefatigable tourist and graphic describer, which appears to have been intended for the *John Bull.*]

My dear Editor,—As it is some little time since I last wrote to you, I think you will be glad to hear what we have been about. I have been staying at

Brighton for the benefit of the vapid bath, and have been bambooed by Mohammets three times a-week, which has done my rheumatiz a world of good. I recovered so well that I have been enabled to cross over to Dip, so called on account of its sea-bathing; and from thence have come on to Paris with the Fulmers, where we arrived on the 25th inst. You are aware I have been in Paris before, but I send you some accounts of different places which I did not notice in my former tower.

The morning after we arrived we hired an extempore servant, not having brought one with us. The French call him a *lack-a-daisy de place*. He is to show us all the lions; but, for my part, I have seen quite enough of wild beasts in England. We walked through the *Faux-pas* something, I forget the name, where the Bar-steel formerly stood; so called from the many iron bars to secure prisoners. We then returned, and crossed one of the bridges, which the French call Ponds: I never could understand why. The name would be more appropriate to the water underneath. This took us to the Palace of the Looksombre; so called because it is in such a dull situation. Here we were indulged with a prohibition of pictures. There was a very fine one, of Runymede presenting a Cup of Nectarine to the Gods; and another, of Morpheus perspiring all the Birds and Beasts with his Music. There were tigers, and lepers, and pantheons, and all sorts of animals, both bipod and tripod, a dancing with all their might. I was much struck with a full-length portrait of a lady, painted by one M. Angelo

—(?) whether the member of parliament. We afterwards visited a small private gallery of statuts, where, we saw some beautiful sculpture—particularly a head of Sisera, the great Roman orator, by the celebrated Canuto. Proceeding from thence, we looked into the Hospital for Incurables. I wonder they get any patients to go into it, if they cannot cure.

Returning home to our hotel, we were nearly run over. Lavy was so much frightened, that she went into violent high asterisks; but fortunately I had my bottle of romantic vinegar with me, which, with the help of some heart's-ease from a chymist's shop, soon put her to rights. I was a long time, however, before I could make the people understand me; for though I can parley French pretty well, I don't speak it geometrically, as my daughter does. The words are simple enough, but the idiotisms puzzle me.

Lavy was too weak to walk further, so we got her into a polacre—a thing like a hackney coach. In the evening she was well enough to go with us to the theatre, where the play was Otho, the Moor of Venus. I didn't like the man who did the Moor. They called him Tall-moor, but I thought him rather short. He was taller than Mr. Kean, to be sure. After all, it was not Shakspur's Otho, but only a French transportation, by one Lucy.

A gentleman, near me, said *Ducee;* I suppose he meant *deuced* bad; and I thought so too; but it wouldn't become a lady to make such an exculpation.

Early the next day we hired an overture for an excrescence to Versailles; Mr. Fulmer followed in a

crabrollee, which is a large gig with a head. We passed the Place Louis Quinzy, where Louis the 19th was bulletined by Roguespear, and the other butchers of the Rational Convention. It makes one blood cradle to think of the many bloody asseverations and massy curs which took place on this spot; and yet those wretches, like the Hunts, and the Watsons, and the Thistlewoods of our day, call themselves patriarchs.

We made a circus on our return to visit Moll-mason, the favourite retreat of Bunaparte, where he spent so much of his time with the Empress Josephus.

In the evening we went, by invocation, to a party at a French Marquizes. They called it a sorry one; but I thought everything very grand. The ladies pressed me to take a hand at cards, and several offered to give up their places in order to *take me in*, which was very complacent; but I did not see any cribbage table, or all fours, which are the only games I understand.

The next day we saw the King go to high Mars: he looks very infirm with the gout and rheum, and his legs were wrapped up in funnels. We saw a good many more sights, such as the Hospital of Saltpetre; the Malefactory of Goblins; the Ecole de Fallacy, (which answers to our Pottecary's Hall,) and the Garden of Plants: by the by, how could it be a garden of anything else? And, taking a short pommade in the Elizabeth Fields, we dined again at the Traitors, where we had soup made of potash, a hamlet, and some ciceroni. The waiter's name I found was Garson,

for everybody called him by his name. Indeed, this seems to be the general custom in Paris; for instance, we were in a shop the other day—by the by, it was called a magazine, from which I concluded they sold gunpowder, and was terribly afraid of an explosion; but Mr. Fulmer assured me that everything in the shop might *go off* without any harm to us; but this is only by way of epilogue. To return from my aggression. I observed, whenever people came in to ask the price of anything, the mistress always called them by their christian names. The most common names were Frank and Sue, with now and then a Billy. Even the clerk at Mr. Roastchild's, the banker, when Mr. Fulmer went with me to present our letter of interdiction, called him Billy, which I certainly thought rather familiar; but Mr. F. showed no shagreen—he is always polite and indigent. The bankers gave us, amongst the rest, a very bright piece of gold; and on my asking what coin it was, they said a "Louis dis week." I had seen a great many Louis, but none so late as this week; so I suppose there has just been a new coinage.

It will be expected that I shall say something of the political recurrences of the country I am visiting, particularly as so few visitors have diluted upon this tropic. The chamber of deputies are not chosen like our members of Parliament; but by electuary colleges, sent from each district, or aggrandisement. I have before described how the debates are carried on. There is a minister of war—a minister of moreen—of the home apartment, &c. &c. The minister for

foreign affairs, it is said, has sent in his portmanteau to the king, and it is not yet known who is to be his predecessor.

This morning has been spent in deranging our future plans. Lavy and I were for distending our tower into Italy; but Mr. Fulmer assuaged us from undertaking it at this season, especially as my daughter is rather delicate. I confess I should like to have gone to Rome, if it were only for the salt-water bathing. Lavy will have it that it is an inland place; but that can't be, for everybody has read of the sea of Rome. She says it is only a paper sea; but that is nonsense. Besides, I should have liked to see the grand Furnival at Easter. It was then proposed that we should return by Belzebub and the low countries; but I don't like going amongst low people; I have never been used to it. We have at last determined to return through Normandie. So we shall embrocate at Dippe, and land at Brighton again, where we may have a chance of seeing Her Majesty (God bless her!)—if she is still at the Paywilliam, which looks for all the world like a parcel of china jars on a tea-board. Besides, I want Lavy to try Mr. Mohammet's vapid bath, and get bambooed, which, I think, will do her as much good as it did me. Mr. Fulmer strongly advises us to travel by the stage, and talks of going to the managerie to secure places for us; but I do not much admire the dilly-jaunts, from what I have seen of them: they are great lumbering things, like a travelling show of the Bone-asses, or the Yorkshire Giant. I should prefer going in a carrots. I dread the

journey, if we are to be jolted over the stones all the way, as we were in coming. I wish the roads were muckmodernized, as they are in England. We are only waiting now for our pass-pots, which are to be counteracted by the English convoy, and then visaveed by the French minister.

Believe me yours eternally,

LAVINIA RAMSBOTTOM.

THE PREVAILING EPIDEMIC.

We request our fair readers will not turn away from this article in disgust, upon reading its title, with the idea that we are going to be exceedingly professional, and plunge into a grave medical dissertation upon the influenza. Generally diffused as that malady has been, since its invention a few years back, we leave it for our scientific contemporaries to define its minute pathology. The disease we are about to describe has been quite as rapid and extensive in its progress, with the curious distinction that it appears to have confined its attacks to the fair sex alone; and where they have once been inoculated with it its consequences have been as certain and incurable as hydrophobia.

It is generally the custom of the table orator in making speeches, preparatory to proposing the health of any individual, to leave his hearers as much in the dark concerning the object of his panegyrics as his ingenuity will allow, whilst he keeps assuring his guests that he is confident they must know the individual to whom he is alluding. This is done with the view of giving additional interest to the speech, and by bringing the name out at its termination (often an entirely different person to the one whom the auditors

had already settled on in their own minds), of producing the sensation, which our neighbours in France call a *coup de théatre*. We might do the same kind of thing in the present case; but we fear its symptoms are so very palpable that the disease would be recognised before the reader had got through a quarter of a page, and the excitement of our intended revelation be forestalled. We, therefore, name this dangerous malady at once, and discarding all technical nomenclature, term it the *Berlin Wool Infatuation*.

The plan adopted in most medical discussions, of tracing the progress of any particular epidemic, instead of at once finding out a remedy for it, may be followed with advantage in the present instance. Like the cholera, it is supposed originally to have come from the east. We will not, however, go back even to the dark ages of the Bayeux tapestry for its commencement, or to the later epoch of the patiently embroidered arras, for which the great Raffaelle painted his immortal Cartoons as designs. Neither will we swell our paper by details of the first manufactory of tapestry at Paris, set up by the good Henri Quatre, to which he invited the great artists of Flanders to contribute their designs; nor the far more celebrated establishment of the Gobelins, instituted under Louis XIV., from whose looms the hangings of the noblest houses in France were supplied. Were we poetically disposed, we could indulge in glowing *tableaux* of the "fayre ladyes" of the olden time, embroidering the surcoats of their professed champions for the approaching tournay—

"As it were a mede,
All ful of freshe floures, white and rede,"

as old Geoffrey Chaucer hath it; or working quietly at their frames in the absence of their liege lords, who were fighting for the "holie crosse" in Palestine. We could tell how they wove their own fair tresses amidst the gold and silver threads of the scarf, which they gave as the guerdon of their true loves' valour; and how, surrounded by their handmaidens in the cool pleasaunce of the garden, with the mavis pouring out its glad minstrelsy from the thick foliage; or, in the bay window of the hall, through which the bright sunbeam darted so joyously as it threw the colours of the stained glass in broken light upon the armour and carved woodwork, they elaborated those large tapestries, which now hang mildewed and time-worn from the wainscot of the chambers of our old English homes. But, unfortunately, we have a keener sense of the real than the romantic; and, passing over the glamour with which antiquity invests the olden time, we will discourse merely upon the existing infatuation of the present age.

The foundation of the epidemic first occurred some sixty or eighty years back—it may be a century—in the shape of samplers: oblong pieces of coarse dingy canvass, worked with certain hieroglyphics, which may still occasionally be seen in cottages, and the back parlours of primitive settlers in country towns. We conceive that the sampler had for its object the instruction of the ladies of the last century in the science

and mysteries of marking. We are led to this supposition from the body of the work being generally formed of mystic characters composing various alphabets, which looked as if their component letters had perpetually suffered from rheumatic fever, and were quite out of joint; and, had it not been for their coming in the usual order, requiring extreme patience and ingenuity to decypher. But when the fair embroidress chanced to be of an imaginative or artistical turn of mind, her fancy took bolder flights than the mere representation of the alphabets. A group of remarkably comical trees, like large strawberries standing on their stalks, and two figures with green apples, as large by comparison as Dutch cheeses, in their hands, allowed by courtesy to represent Adam and Eve, were intended altogether as a view of Paradise; whilst a coloured spiral, like the twisted end of a corkscrew, winding round the stem of one of the above trees, indicated the presence of the serpent. The situation assigned to these humble opponents of Miss Linwood, was generally over the mantel-piece, between two crockery little boys very scantily dressed, affording a resting place for two porcupine quills, a glass pipe, an ornamented pen with a tassel at the end, and some peacocks' feathers; all so ingeniously arranged that if you moved one of them the rest were sure to tumble down simultaneously. There was, however, some use in these productions. The knowledge of marking gained in their formation assisted the washerwoman in her correct distribution of the articles entrusted to her charge; the red and blue birds, little men and women

in quadrangular apparel, and red houses with black windows, underneath the alphabets, had no particular end, it is true; but they appear, in the opinion of the maker, to have been essential to the formation of the true sampler.

These were long popular, until "the diffusion of knowledge dispelling the clouds of ignorance," as they say at literary institutions, brought with it great improvements. Parents were gratified by their daughters returning from school at the end of the half year, laden with dinner mats, urn rugs, and decanter stands, worked all over with the most curious flowers, extraordinary fruit, gaudy shells, and impossible sea-weed that ever existed; and bordered by tufts of coloured worsted as large as oranges; which, if charged for in the bill equal to the price of corresponding articles at fancy fairs, were still of some service, and in the scale of domestic ingenuity, far beyond the shell pincushions, butterfly penwipers, ornamented oil jars, and multitudinous perforated-card abominations, which are denominated "fancy-work" by governesses, and "dust-collectors" by intelligent housekeepers.

By degrees the samplers entirely disappeared, and we began to think that the art of marking, like that of illuminating missals, would pass away from the earth, and be only spoken of as a thing that was. Indelible inks started up in legions as the needle-work declined, pounce rose to a premium, and embroidery appeared fast sinking to oblivion. But we were mistaken—we were only upon the eve of a fresh outbreak, which, spurning all control, soon spread its influence far and

wide, running from one family to another (that is to say, amidst the female branches), with the certainty of the plague; and quite as difficult to eradicate when it had once taken hold of the system.

Its first attack was as unassuming as it was insidious. A few simple wreaths of flowers, composed, upon close inspection, of small bright coloured squares, appeared in the linen-drapers' windows, modestly displayed amongst the other goods. We did not think much of them at the time, until we went one evening to a small social party, where the ladies had been requested to "bring their work," as the meeting was quite friendly. Now we always fight very shy of those minor *réunions* where ladies are requested to "bring their work." We look upon them, generally speaking, as very shady affairs, enlivened only by that faint amateur chirping which people, from courtesy, denominate "a little music;" and where, when the good folks of the house asked you to "come and take your bread and cheese with them, and they really meant it," you found they were gentlemen and ladies of their word, as you seldom got anything else, unless it was the occasional luxury of a baked potato. We were aware the term "bringing your work" signified carrying a delicate little basket, containing an equally delicate pair of scissors, a tiny reel, a lilliputian housewife, a few very minikin pins, and certain odd-shaped scraps of muslin, intended we believe for cuffs; with little triangular bits of linen—we do not recollect their proper name, but we know they have something to do with the arm of a shirt, having observed them at the

shoulder-joint articulation of our own. These affairs are presumed never to have been undertaken with a view to their ultimate completion, but to have served as perpetual excuses for idleness and conversation throughout many tea-parties.

However, we went on the evening in question, and there we saw one young lady who had brought neither muslin nor Irish, but a long strip of black velvet covered with canvass, through the apertures of which she was, with unwearying energy, pushing a stout needle, that pulled after it a train of what we, in the innocence of our hearts, termed coloured worsted, but which was pronounced, with an air of importance, to be 'Berlin Wool.' We were, moreover, indulged by the fair operative with the further information, that when six or seven feet of the velvet had been worked in a similar manner, according to the painted pattern at her side, on whose surface she appeared to be making continuous and intricate calculations with the point of her needle, the *ensemble* would form a bell-pull, as soon as the canvass threads were drawn out. A slight spasm convulsed our frame; we saw the consequences likely to result from the introduction of this species of manufacture, and we were not mistaken. We were at that time in the habit of occasionally passing a shop where the patterns were shown, mixed with the drapery; and the first alarming symptom we discovered was the delineation of a Turk smoking an imposing pipe, in a temporary divan of the "newest town prints." This somewhat excited our apprehension, which was not lessened when we next perceived a Mameluke horse-

man galloping fiercely over plains of Mousselin-de-Laine and Gros de Naples, as well as mounted Arabs prancing at the feet of pyramids of Chalis, at "twelve and sixpence the complete dress," and red-capped Greeks with long guns and mustachios, apparently guarding boxes of ribands, ticketed at *per* yard, in the most approved style of Brobdignagian twopences and Lilliputian three-farthings.

Anticipating what this would lead to, we were not much surprised on calling one morning upon another young lady, also addicted to fancy-work, who had promised to knit us a purse, or a watch-guard, or something of the kind, to find her very busy at an immense wooden frame, which looked like the skeleton of a cheval glass, surrounded by skeins of wool embracing every tint of the rainbow, and, in our imagination, an hundred more beside, transferring the lineaments of the identical Turk, pipe and all, to a yard and a half of chocolate-coloured cloth, which she gave us to understand was intended for the decoration of a low-seated, high-backed, old-curiosity-shop-looking chair, that appeared to have been lately promoted from the lumber-loft to the drawing-room. Of course we admired it, and thought it exquisitely beautiful—what else could we do?—for the young lady was very pretty, and her white arms appeared to great advantage on the dark cloth. But we were conscious of much evil in the performance; and although we mustered up some pretty compliments about Ariadne, and Sappho at her loom, and wishes that we were Phaon, and the like species of soft nothings that single gentlemen feel

called upon to utter under similar circumstances, yet we inwardly prophesied that ere long every house would be turned, by a species of domestic pantomime, into an amateur Kidderminster factory. Our predictions were soon verified by the uncontrollable rapidity with which the patterns now spread about town; and the attraction of the print-shops was completely eclipsed by the more prominent display of gaudy pictures in the fancy woollen-warehouses. Even the Turks, Greeks, and Mamelukes fell in public estimation; and yielded to large copies of German prints, bearing extraordinary and unpronounceable names, to the great joy of the dentists, who derived a considerable income from the dislocated jaws of the rash individuals who attempted to utter them; and these again were speedily superseded by Berlin editions of our most popular engravings, cut up into myriads of tiny parallelograms, and painted all sorts of vivid and unmatchable colours.

And having thus reached the climax of the disease, it behoves us to give a few cases in illustration; after the manner of medical gentlemen who endeavour to write themselves into practice by publishing a book—with the exception that our cases are well authenticated, and theirs are generally the ingenious conceptions of a vivid imagination.

Case I.

Miss A—, a young lady aged one-and-twenty, was exceedingly clever at every species of domestic accomplishment, even to making pinafores for her little bro-

thers, contributions to the "Ladies-baby's-bib-and-tucker-general-delivery-loan-association!" and capucines for herself, as well as all kinds of alterations to make the wardrobe of last year suit the fashions of the present, until she chanced to go on a visit to some young friends, where it is supposed she caught the infatuation. For a time she was content with embroidering scrolls and wreaths, or little mats for shells, china, and gim-cracks on the cheffonier; but was, at last, violently seized with "Bolton Abbey in the olden time," and "Napoleon crossing the Alps." Since this severe attack she has never been known to hem even a pocket-handkerchief, and her *boudoir*, which was the pattern of order, is covered with small shreds and ends of wool littering about in every corner. At present she has few lucid intervals, and should this distressing state continue, it is feared her friends must place her in confinement at a stall in a bazaar, where her melancholy aberration of intellect may be productive of some little emolument; her friends having discovered that the patterns and wools are not purchased for nothing. She has thrown out some mysterious hints about working a hearth-rug for the drawing-room, in small forget-me-nots, which her friends are endeavouring to oppose, as, should it succeed, it is feared she may take it into her head to cover all the chairs, including the music-stool.

Case II.

Mrs. B—, considered herself very economical, and a good manager; her enemies pronounced her exceedingly stingy, and a thorough screw. The carpet of Mrs. B—'s parlour began to look rather worn and *thready*, and she forthwith adopted the following plan to get a new one at a small outlay. She commenced paying an undeviating series of visits to all her young friends who were clever in the Berlin line; and always admired their patterns as "the sweetest things she had seen." When the bait had been swallowed, she threw out hints of her intense desire to possess a specimen of the young lady's work; and the next day forwarded a piece of eighteen-inch-square canvass, with the request that it might be worked in any pattern the aforesaid young lady chose. By much perseverance she was enabled to procure a sufficient number of squares to form an entire carpet, which was eventually laid down, to the admiration of ecstatic visitors, and the great satisfaction of Mrs. B—.

Case III.

Mr. C— was a young gentleman with an income of six hundred a year, who came to reside in a country town for study and retirement. He was immediately attacked by every marriageable young lady in the place, and received more purses, damson cheese, table-covers, currant jam, fire-screens, little worsted jugs to keep

half-pence in, potted beef, and spills, than he knew what to do with. At last the Berlin wool changed the style of all these delicate attentions. The first shot aimed at him was in the shape of a rug for his coffee pot, with his initials done in German text letters. Next came a small kettle-holder, worked with the representation of a very blue kettle on a very red fire, and bearing the motto "MIND IT BOILS;" and lastly, having sprained his foot, a few days after the accident he received nine pairs of slippers—some covered with witches and demons, others embroidered with roses and dahlias; but the majority worked in coloured vandykes like a crimped rainbow. His footstool was eventually carried away by force to be turned into an ottoman; and his easy chair was abducted in the same manner to have its back adorned by "Sir Walter Scott in his study at Abbotsford." So acutely did poor Mr. C— suffer from these unflinching attacks, that he is presumed to have run away in the middle of the night, leaving directions with his housekeeper that the immense accumulation of fancy work should be sold without reserve, and the proceeds applied towards the formation of a fund for building a Persecuted Bachelors' Asylum.

It will be at once perceived from the above melancholy documents, that the mania has reached a fearful pitch of intensity. But there is an old saying which teaches us the undeniable truth that when things are as bad as they possibly can be they cannot very well be

worse, and it is therefore probable that, before long, we may perceive some slight amelioration of the symptoms. Let us hope this will take place, or it may be necessary to hang a red cross worked in Berlin wool upon the door of every house infected with the malady. We are aware that, like turning an electrifying machine, it is an easy performance, producing a great effect; but still, as one of the harsher sex, we wish to impress the young ladies with a proper notion of the dread with which young gentlemen look upon every species of fancy work. We know that flirtations may be delightfully carried on, whilst seated behind a twenty-inch square of canvass strained upon a frame almost to what scientific people term "a solution of continuity," or admiring the gradual progress of a Louis Quatorze scroll — but flirtations are like squibs without bangs, or wet rockets; a great deal of flourish ending in nothing but disappointment. We also know that as the lady bends down to inspect her work more minutely, or count the squares; the swan-like curve of her neck appears to the greatest advantage, and that her silken and perfumed ringlets are thrown into most exquisite contrast with the rough worsted they traverse, like a spring zephyr passing over a furze field. But silken ringlets are very delicate fetters to bind down in permanent security so wild and uncertain a prisoner as the heart; if, indeed, the heart can be a prisoner.

To speak in matter-of-fact terms, it is plainly evident that to meet the depressed state of affairs in general, and matrimony in particular, useful wives are now preferred to astonishing ones. Not that we wish

to cry down accomplishments—far from it; for when combined with real utility they are all-potent in attraction. The fair creature who can superintend the manufacture of negus and lemonade for her company, "behind the scenes," and then come calmly into the drawing-room, and sing the finale to *La Sonnambula* whilst they are drinking it, to carry on time and help out the evening, is a treasure beyond all price. We will allow her, possessing these excellences, to indulge occasionally in a small German pattern, by way of recreation. Let her not, however, be too much enthralled by its allurements, but ever keep in mind, that, in point of real domestic economy, it is better to be able to sew on a button properly, than embroider all the sleeping dogs, flying pheasants, and smoking Mussulmen that were ever produced. We admit that the darning of stockings is by no means a romantic occupation—at least we never find it as such in the old poets—but experience proves it to be an exceedingly useful one, and worthy of consideration in all properly conducted establishments.

And, finally, for the benefit of patriots and politicians, to show how much in reality all theories of general amelioration eventually yield to personal benefit, we beg to inform our lady readers, that being an author, in the same situation as Dr. Johnson when he first came to town, "miserably poor," and withal, most grateful for any assistance, we may, perhaps, be pardoned for throwing out the hint—in the most delicate manner possible—that a trifle of Berlin work, in the

cause of charity, cannot be misapplied,—that our present slippers exhibit unequivocal symptoms of rapid and inevitable decay, and, that we are not at all particular as to pattern.*

* Our concert going friends will perceive that the above article furnished the talented *buffo* singer, Mr. John Parry, with his song of "Berlin Wool."

THE GRISETTE.

A STORY OF PARIS.

AT the period we were studying medicine in the French capital, in one of the *mansardes* that were situated at the top of our hotel—displaying those eccentric varieties of sloping walls and ceilings, that only pertain to cocklofts in England—resided one of the prettiest little girls we ever saw while we lived at Paris. We had noticed her from the first day of our arrival; but we had never entered into conversation with her, although it was frequently our lot to meet her on the staircase in the morning, as she was about "*cherchante son petit godet de crême, et sa demi-once de café;*" such being, according to the experienced and veracious Paul de Kock, the first daily business of a Parisian grisette. It so chanced that we owed our introduction to her own hospitality, which took place under the following circumstances.

The two principal resorts of the dance-loving "*jeunes gens*" of Paris, are Constant's and Tonnelier's. The former is a handsome stone building, with a spacious and elegant *salon* on its first floor, capable of accommodating three or four hundred people. The room is brilliantly illuminated with gas, and adorned with statues and looking-glasses; and round its side a number of little tables are arranged, for those who prefer quietly sitting and sipping their wine, at twelve sous a-bottle, while they watch the mazes of the quadrille and waltz. *On danse à la belle étoile, chez Tonnelier;* and, consequently, this *guinguette* only does for summer weather. The piece of ground appropriated to Terpsichore is smoothly gravelled, and lighted by a quantity of lamps suspended from wires stretching across the garden. *Cabinets particuliers*, for dinner and flirtation, surround the enclosure, with alcoves beneath them, similar to the supper-boxes at Vauxhall; and at both places the band is composed of ten or a dozen performers, who make a demand of five sous for each quadrille.

The balls of the Barrière du Mont Parnasse were one of our most constant haunts at Paris. The Chaumière, on the boulevard of the same name, was all very well in its way; but if you did not know a great many of the company, you were not likely to procure many partners. At the *barrière*, however, there was a greater freedom of introduction, added to which, you saved the few francs which your *billet d'entrée* to Tivoli or Ranelagh would have cost you. Many, many happy and careless evenings have we passed there; the waltz,

the wine, and the music, alike lending their powerful auxiliaries to our excitement: and many times have we returned we hardly knew how—five in a *citadine*, or three in a cab, awaking the lazy echoes of the Rue de Vaugirard and Chambre des Pairs with our student's chorus.

One evening in October, just as autumn was closing its theatre by bringing out some of its best pieces, previously to the arrival of the new lessee, we came home in our usual *good* temper on *fête* evenings; and, as we had left the ball-room red-hot from the *galoppe*, and found ourselves rather chilly from the change of temperature, we determined on indulging in a little *vin chaud*. In furtherance of this object, as soon as we entered our apartment, we commenced lighting the fire, or, rather, endeavouring to do so, at the expense of an entire box of lucifers, and *two* sheets of the *Times* newspaper, that we had received from home in the morning, containing the intelligence that the lady of somebody or another of our acquaintance had added one more contribution to the bread-crumb and batter-pudding consumers of the nursery. But, lighting a fire in Paris is very different to performing the same task in England. You must first sweep up all the ashes of the day before into a heap; and having done this with satisfaction to yourself, you bring the iron "dogs" together, and place three pieces of wood upon them, which you have dragged from their depository under the bed, or in the top drawer, or along with your tea-things, or out of your carpet-bag, or one of the like receptacles for *bois à brûler* in

French lodgings. You next pick out all the pieces of charcoal you can find on the hearth, about the size of a small cork; and, this finished, you drag an "*allumette chimique*" across the sole of your shoe, and kindle one of the aforesaid pieces of charcoal by its aid, placing the live ember among the bits of wood; and then you begin to blow gently, first with your mouth, next with your old cap, which has been torn the week before in a row at the Bal Montesquieu, and, finally, you call in the aid of the bellows.

But, whether there was a spell against our fire-place that night, or whether the woody fibres of the fuel had changed into asbestos in our absence, we know not—all we could do, we could not raise a flame; and, in groping amongst the ashes and charcoal in search of a spark, we formed no inapt personation of the young gentleman on the medal of the Royal Humane Society, with the exception that we were properly arrayed in shirt, shoes, and trowsers, which the said young gentleman appears to have dispensed with altogether. At last, we got angry, and throwing the bellows away, with a jerk that sent them sliding over the polished floor to the other end of the room, we determined to throw ourselves upon the generosity of our *voisins* for "*un peu de feu*," a bequest we ourselves had often granted in our turn. We accordingly looked out of the window into the court formed by the walls of the house, to see if there was a fire gleaming in any of the apartments; a doubtful speculation we will allow, for the French never light a fire before there is occasion. To our great comfort, however, we saw some intermittent

flashes illumining the room of our little neighbour, the grisette. We knew it was her window, for she was a *blanchisseuse de fin*, and sundry *jabots*, *chemisettes*, and *fichus* fluttered in the obscurity.

"*Qui frappe?*" asked a soft voice, as we knocked at the door of the *mansarde*, and, shovel in hand, awaited admission. "*C'est moi, mademoiselle.*" (We addressed her as we should have done a *demoiselle comme il faut*, for the grisettes of Paris are particular.) "*C'est moi; Monsieur S——:* I am come to beg a little *braise* to make some *vin chaud.*"

"*Volontiers,*" she replied; and she opened the door at once, allowing us to enter the small neatly-arranged chamber.

It was one of the highest of the garrets, and certainly not above ten or twelve feet square; yet it was astonishing how the numerous *meubles* were arranged in it, and without any appearance of confusion. The little camp-bed stood against the wall at the low part of the pitch of the roof; and the crockery fire-place was placed at the other end of the room, surrounded by several of those odd earthenware pipkins, that supply the place of saucepans in the *ménage* of the Quartier Latin. The little square basket, or *cabas*, (the invariable accompaniment of a grisette,) was suspended over the bed; some flowers were placed in a blown-glass egg-cup on the mantelpiece: two or three prints from the series of the *Cours de droit* in the *Charivari* were pinned against the wall, and a birdcage, containing two canaries, stood on the drawers, by the side of the pie-dish-looking basin and milk-jug-shaped ewer, which formed the auxiliaries to the *toilette*.

"You will be some time lighting your fire, Monsieur," said our fair companion, as we were picking out some red-hot pieces from the *four*. "If you please, you can warm your wine here, and it will give you less trouble."

There was so much sincerity in the invitation, that we accepted it as freely as it was offered, and having run down to our room to bring up the wine and its concomitants, and lock the door after us, we commenced the preparation of the *vin chaud*. Oh! if our friends in England could have seen us, whom they thought all diligence and discretion, sitting on one side the fire-place, in a blue velvet cap with a gold band, mulling wine; with a pretty French girl for our *vis-à-vis*, ironing habit-shirts and singing Louisa Puget's songs, just as if she was by herself, what a name we should have acquired amongst the old ladies of our acquaintance, who thought us *so* steady! Not but that we always had an unconquerable dread of being called a "good young man." Understand us, reader: we had no wish to acquire the reputation of a dissipated student, or profligate idler—far, far from it; but, when we looked amongst the circle of our own friends, we found all the so-called "amiable young women," and all the "good young men," such extraordinary *muffs*, that we were never afterwards anxious for the appellation.

Well, we manufactured our *breuvage*, and of course offered our pretty host a portion of it. She was not above accepting our libation, and we gradually entered into conversation. She told us that she earned nearly

two francs a-day at her vocation, but that there was a prospect of her soon bettering herself (as country maids-of-all-work say, when they leave a place of six guineas a-year), for she was engaged to be married, and her *amant* had a good situation in an *imprimerie* on the Quai Voltaire. "*C'est un très bon enfant*," she said; "*mais un peu étourdi*." After this, she asked us to sing an English song, with which we complied, to the best of our abilities, in attempting something we had heard in London the night we passed "the Hall;" and then, in her turn, she treated us with "Son Nom," "Mire dans mes yeux tes yeux," and two or three others of the same bearing. Altogether, there was such a confiding simplicity and joyous air about this poor girl, living in a garret, and earning but forty sous a-day, that we would not have distressed her feelings by any rude sally for the world. And, when we bade her good night, although, in the prodigality of our bachelor hearts, we would have lived upon bread and water the whole of the week for a single kiss, we conquered our gallantry by our principle, and merely bowed, cap in hand, as we thanked her for her hospitality.

A day or two after these events, we received an invitation from a worthy friend of ours who resided at Versailles, to go and spend a few weeks with him at his house. Invitations to stay in a French family are something like angels' visits, so we immediately accepted, for fear he might change his mind. We had, moreover, a small brother, who luxuriated upon potatoe salad and *potage à l'oseille* at a school in the

Avenue St. Cloud, in order to learn French perfectly; and we thought we might as well be near him, in order to give him an occasional meal at a *restaurateur's* to keep him from quite starving until the holidays. Well, we "locked up all our treasures," and sent our boxes to a fellow student to be taken care of; and took our place, one fine morning, in the lumbering overgrown rabbit-hutches, termed *gondolles*, above all other things in the world, that started from some of the partially unexplored regions between the back of the Tuileries and the Rue St. Honoré; and, passing through Sèvres and a country which appeared to be inhabited solely by *traiteurs* and *marchands de vin*, we arrived at Versailles in two hours after our departure from Paris, for the railway was not yet completed. It is not our intention to describe what we saw during our month's *séjour*. Every room, picture, and waterwork has been so often alluded to in books, that such a task is rendered perfectly unnecessary. It will suffice to say, that we knew everything by heart by the time we left; and, having seen the grand fountains spouting out like Brobdignag water-plugs, and walked blindfolded along the *tapis vert*, we returned to Paris, not very unwilling to get back to a little amusement; for, independent of the palace and its attractions, Versailles is a living grave.

We were sitting in the porter's lodge of the hotel on the evening of our arrival—collecting our letters and newspapers, and learning what events had occurred in our absence, from the *garçon*—when our little friend, the *blanchisseuse*, came in for her key, and went up

stairs. We do not think she saw us, as we were partly concealed by the door: but we were able to remark a great alteration in her since we left. Her features were pale and sharpened, with that drooping expression termed by the multitude "pinched in," but where the anatomist can trace every corner and process of the facial bones, but too plainly intelligible under their wasted covering. Her eyes were red and glistening; and she had lost the light elastic *pas de Française* with which she was accustomed to trip about the house.

"*Elle est bien changée, monsieur,*" said the *garçon*, as we followed her with our eyes along the court. "She was going to be married, but her *amant* has left her, and is paying his addresses in another quarter."

"She still lives here, then?"

"*Oui, monsieur: mais, la pauvre petite pleure, elle se désole, et elle ne mange pas.*"

The last words were pronounced in a very dolorous accent: it was evident that Antoine thought it the greatest sign of grief to give up eating.

"And when was the engagement broken off?" we asked.

"*Monsieur*, it was about three days after you left. She met him at Constant's one *fête* evening, but he scarcely noticed her, and danced entirely with another *amie*. She came home at night, and cried a great deal in the lodge, and the old lady in No. 14 sent her down a little liqueur. She takes it sadly to heart, and neglects everything else."

We were, indeed, very sorry to hear all this, and thought that we would try and comfort her—nay, we anticipated a pleasing task in so doing. It is so interesting — so eloquent, that comfort which an English student of two-and-twenty can offer to a pretty French girl of eighteen. Of course, we meant our consolation to be friendly, and Platonic—could it be otherwise? And yet we have sometimes thought how terribly foolish the theories of the old philosopher of Athens were!

We finished our conversation, lighted a candle, and retired to our room. Our boxes had been forwarded by a porter, and we had a few minutes' occupation in arranging them, and looking out appointments that had been so quietly reposing for the last month. At last, the shirts and stockings were all laid in their respective drawers; the boots were pulled out of the carpet-bag, and placed outside the door; and, when we had routed out our night-apparel from the packet we had brought from Versailles, we jumped into bed, and began to read, according to custom. We always had a terrible habit of reading in bed, and plead guilty to thinking it dangerous; but it is so comfortable! In the daytime, choose what hour you will, the pleasant images which your reading has left flitting before your imagination are liable to be instantaneously and unromantically disturbed by the common and dull realities of your existence. But at night it is different, for all is then still around you: your fancy follows the creations of the writer, free and unrestrained; and if gentle and soothing thoughts should chance to arise from the bearing of the subject you have been study-

ing, you have nought to arrest them but the power of the "drowsy god," which, if it comes as an interrupter of happiness, at least places a barrier to the advance of sorrow.

Eh bien! we read, and thought, and snuffed the candle, and read again, and, at last, went to sleep; and, in the common course of events, we awoke again the next morning. But, as we went down stairs, on our way to breakfast at Martin's, we did not meet Eugenie, as had been our former custom. The *garçon* told us she had not passed the lodge that morning; but he thought she was much distressed the night before, and had slept later from thorough weariness of heart and spirits. We returned some common-place answer, and walked over to the *restaurant*, in company with a copy of the *Times*, whose elephantine proportions awfully astonished the habitual readers of the *Siècle*, the *Presse*, and the *Gazette des Tribunaux*.

* * * * *

The same evening that we returned from Versailles, Eugenie had been to one of the balls at the Barrière du Mont-Parnasse. She had gone thither with no idea of pleasure or amusement, but in the hope of seeing her faithless suitor, and procuring some explanation from him of his conduct towards her. In one of her expectations she had not been disappointed, for he was there, but not alone—his new love had accompanied him, and they were dancing together the whole evening. It were foolish to say that he was not moved at the sight of poor Eugenie's pale face and altered *mine;* but he pretended to carry it off with a sneer and laugh,

and he answered her in slighting and careless words. He lessened her before her rival—a trial, which, having once undergone, a woman *never forgets.* Repulsed and crushed, she left the room; but, as she turned round on quitting it, she perceived him whirling in the rapid train of waltzers with his usual unconcern, probably little thinking of the heart that he had spurned and broken that evening.

In that terrible calm of wretchedness which locks up those tears we could find so much relief from indulging in, Eugenie arrived at home. She silently and mechanically took her key from the porter's lodge, (it was there we had seen her,) and then hurried to her own room. She felt about in the obscurity for her *allumettes*, and, lighting her candle, remained standing at the table for several minutes, fixed as a statue, and scarcely betraying signs of life or being. And then a fearful resolve for the first time came over her: steadily, and with a calm almost supernatural, she closed the door and windows, and shut up the aperture of the chimney with a square board, on which some gaudily-coloured pictures of dancing and diversion formed a harsh contrast to her own feelings. She took the small *fourneau*, which we had used on the evening we first met her, from its corner, and placed it on the table. Her entire stock of charcoal was next collected on its grate, and, kindling a piece in the candle, she deposited it amongst the rest, raising with her own breath the poisonous vapour that was to deprive her of existence. The tiny ember crackled and sparkled in the current of air, and by degrees communicated its glowing life to

the whole mass, as small particles of white ashes began to fill the atmosphere, and gradually to settle on the table and surrounding articles. A cold blast poured in from the opening beneath the door—she deliberately impeded it with a shawl laid along the floor; and, hanging what articles of clothing were at hand against the ill-fastened windows, she sank down on her low bed, and awaited her fate. Before long, she began to breathe with difficulty; she seemed to experience the same sensation that she would have felt in a small and crowded apartment, or in the low *loges* of a close and densely-filled theatre. She moved her arms around her, as if to throw off some impending coverture; the circulation of air thus produced somewhat revived her, and she respired more freely: but in an instant afterwards the oppression returned. Then her pulse quickened, and a violent palpitation ensued. Throb—throb! —her heart was leaping in her bosom, as if it would force its way through the membrane that contained it, and its deadened and heavy beat was marked and audible in the perfect stillness of the room, broken only by the tinkling of the charcoal consuming in the *fourneau*. The distant chimes of the Luxembourg clock told the hour of ten—where would she be when they next sounded? The room would be a chamber of death—her bed would become a bier to sustain a corpse, and that corpse would be herself!

The candle, overpowered by the heavy and poisoned atmosphere, began to burn with a dull and oppressed flame round its tall black wick; and the poor birds in the cage, distressed for air, were fluttering and gasping

on their perches, or rapidly jumping from one to the other, and passing their beaks quickly and successively between the wires of their prison. An indefinable sense of alarm now stole over her, and her thoughts became visionary and delirious. The house seemed giving way beneath her; the walls of her room had fallen in, and some unseen power was forcing her towards a precipice into the street below! She clung to the bed, and cried aloud: the floor appeared to sink, and she was going with its ruins, and without the power to help herself.

Suddenly, her sensations changed, and she became once more conscious of her situation; but her ideas were confused and indefinite. A painful tightness of the chest succeeded: her eyes swam with giddiness, and her brain seemed endowed with separate life and motion. Then a heavy murmur, like the drone of a hundred bees, filled her ears, and her sight forsook her: an unconquerable drowsiness stole over her, and she sank into a deep and heavy slumber. From that slumber she never awoke again!

When we returned from breakfast, we found the hotel a scene of terrible excitement. The proprietor, alarmed at the unusual non-appearance of Eugenie, had sent the *concierge* to knock at her apartment, and see if she was indisposed. The old woman returned, affirming that she could obtain no answer, although she had made a grand *tapage* against the door; and, in consequence, the landlord ascended with two *gens d'armes*, and broke the door open. In an instant the whole truth was apparent, as the dense and suffocating vapour still

hung heavily about the room; the birds were lying dead at the bottom of their cage, and the now lifeless body of the hapless Grisette was extended on the bed. At this moment we returned home, and, at the entreaties of the *concierge*, hurried up stairs: not that we had an idea of being able to render any assistance when we heard the circumstances; but, in cases of accident, be they fatal or otherwise, a medical man is always expected to do something by the crowd of bystanders. We threw open the windows, dashed the body with cold water, and, finally, endeavoured to open the jugular vein. A few sluggish drops of black blood oozed out as we withdrew the lancet, but that was all; and we were convinced that she was beyond the chance of human recovery. We closed her eyes, that were directed, lustreless and vacant, towards the *fourneau*, and left the officials in attendance to draw out their accustomed report.

Two days afterwards, a young man entered the portal of Nôtre Dame, and ascended the tower in company with one of the *gardiens*, whose business it is to exhibit the curiosities of this venerable cathedral for a few sous. He mounted rapidly to one of the top galleries of the southern tower, and lingered an instant at the spot from whence Quasimodo is made to hurl the impious Claude Frollo on to the square below, in that beautiful romance, which has cast so wild and mysterious a charm around those blackened and mouldering towers. Suddenly he drew the attention of the *gardien* to a crowd of idlers on the Quai de l'Archevêché, and, seizing the opportunity, climbed over the parapet,

and threw himself headlong down upon the pavement of the Parvis—a fall of two hundred and twenty feet! Some students, who were loitering on the steps of the Hôtel Dieu, ran up to the spot, and a crowd almost instantaneously collected. In three minutes, the crushed and bloody remains were being carried to the Morgue, and before long the body was recognised as that of the faithless lover of the poor Grisette.*

* The leading incidents of the above sketch are no fiction. They occurred in Paris, in November (1838); and the writer was cheapening some books on the Pont St. Michel when the *dénouement* took place.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE LAST DERBY DAY.

(REPORTED WITHOUT HAVING BEEN TO THE RACE.)

We are by no means a sporting character. We never kept a racer; we do not care a straw which horse wins or loses; and have about as much idea of what is meant by the fluctuation of the odds in the sporting divisions of the newspapers as we have of playing upon the ophicleide, — an instrument we never could bring ourselves to learn, for fear of some day tumbling into it and never being heard of again. Neither did we ever make a bet on the course higher than half a dozen pairs of gloves with some dark-eyed Peri in lined muslin and *guirlandes Joséphine*, or a foolish half-crown at a roulette-table,—a very precarious chance in either case. We know as much of Tattersall's as Geoffrey Chaucer did of Musard's quadrilles: and yet we always look forward to the Derby as one of the greatest treats in the whole twelve months.

With these sentiments it may be conceived that we were not over-pleased at being compelled to stay in town on the last Derby day, — the more so, as we had already received several invitations; and similar

despatches to—the following were continually dropping in :—

No. I.

[Hurried writing, and no wafer : brought by a little boy in buttons.]

"DEAR AL.

"Will you have a go-in at a drag to Epsom? It won't come to much—about 2*l.* 10*s.* each, including feed. We shall take something better than cape and gooseberry. Let 's know soon; and learn 'The Monks of Old' and 'The Irish Quadrilles' on your cornet.

"Yours always,
"HARRY ——."

"Lincoln's Inn."

This was refused, for obvious reasons hereafter stated. Besides, we know how these parties always end, where the charm of female society is wanting to check the exuberance of youthful spirits. We joined one some time back, of which our last reminiscence is that of endeavouring to cut up a cold fowl with the cork-screw, and drinking champagne out of a mustard-pot. We have a faint idea of leaving the course with a thousand other vehicles, all jostling along in one whirling cloud of dust and confusion, and disputing about a turnpike ticket—somewhere,—and offering to decide the quarrel by the ancient ordeal of trial by battle with the tollman ; but this scene is as indistinct and evanescent as an unfixed daguerréotype.

No. II.

[Lace-work envelope, scented paper, medallion wafer, stamped with an unintelligible coat-of-arms, and small, formal, angular handwriting—a good specimen of "a style after six lessons."]

"Mrs. ——— is very happy in being able to offer Mr. S——— a seat in her landau to Epsom. Should he feel inclined to join her party, an early answer will oblige."

This was received, and also refused, on Tuesday morning. We were evidently pitched upon to fill up a sudden hiatus at the eleventh hour: besides, three very plain daughters, all single, and carrying flaring parasols all different,—servants in gaudy liveries, who would have made capital harlequins if put into a kaleidoscope,—nothing for lunch but warm sandwiches and flabby cucumber, peppered with dust,—together with an air of intense *parvenu* dash flung over the whole set-out, — all these combined were too much even for the sake of a cast to the Derby.

No. III.

[A dirty piece of paper, folded in that peculiarly ingenious and intricate manner which only the inferior orders can contrive; closed with a common red wafer, ornamented with five distinct impressions of the end of a watch-key.]

"Hond sir i Take the librty to Inform you of A wan as will start from My shop on Wensday for The

Darby to epsm for a Sovrin there And back and shall be onnord by your cumpny from your obedient and Humbil servent

"JOHN HIGGS."

This was from our friend the green-grocer in the next street, and was gratefully declined, as was also the request from a neighbouring shopkeeper that we would inspect the celebrated six-and-sixpenny Derby blouse.

But these were not all the inducements to go. A kind friend, who resides close to the Downs, actually offered us a bed before and after the race. Placards of "superior four-horse coaches to Epsom" stared at us from every office in London; all the railways, annihilating every idea of space, endeavoured, we know not how, to prove that some of their stations were near the course, —we are not certain whether we were not told that the Eastern Counties was the best line to take; and all the world seemed wrapped up in the idea that the Queen would grace the course,—which not proving true, was a remarkable instance of the Derby and *hoax* taking place on the same day. We believe the joke to be original; if not, we humbly crave pardon for having introduced it.

To be candid, the plain truth of the matter was, that we could not afford the trip. The season had been, up to the period in question, comparatively very expensive, and much more gaiety was yet to follow, which would make a great diminution in our exchequer, although we inhabit chambers on the fifth floor in a cheap inn (of court), and contrive occasionally, by dint of extreme caution, to make the same pair of white trowsers appear two consecutive days in Regent Street. But our darling boots—the especial favourites with the bronze morocco tops and patent feet—had begun to evince the first symptoms of decline in the soles, brought on by over-waltzing. Moreover, the invincible stock, with the tiny bouquets embroidered thereon, seemed to have fallen out with our chin, unfortunately "like a stubble land at harvest-home," and

was also on the decay; and a new black waistcoat of plain satin had been shot by some champagne, and tastefully ornamented with red spots, more palpable than pleasing, which rendered another absolutely necessary. We argued with ourselves a long time, which controversy is always an obstinate one; and at last, reflecting that the money which we should kick down at the Derby would go a great way towards replacing these things, if it did not actually cover the expense, we decided *not to go*.

The instant we had come to this determination we assumed a calm resignation, which was almost supernatural, when the sacrifice which we had made is considered. This lasted until the evening before the day, and then our first discomforts began. We gradually became restless and uneasy, feeling as satisfied as a person who, upon principle alone, has given up attending a pleasant evening party "to go to bed early," and consequently lies awake until four in the morning, picturing to himself all the time what is going on at the *réunion* in question, and listening to chimerical cornets-à-piston playing imaginary quadrilles, until every article on his wash-hand-stand appears having a dance to itself in derision.

We went to the theatre to help out the evening; and when it was over, not feeling tired, we entered one of the night-taverns to supper. It was Evans', and the room was crowded with sporting men,—the two names "Coldrenick" and "Attila" perpetually ringing in our ears. This reminded us too keenly of our position, so we rushed away to the Cyder Cellars: here the same

subject formed the only topic of conversation. It was the same at the Albion and the Coal-Hole,—for in our nervous irritability we took supper at all,—we do not think we ever bolted so many poached eggs in our life; and finally, when we dropped into the Wrekin, where the usual talk is unmixedly theatrical, we found the same two names still echoing in every corner of the room. We now gave up all ideas of distraction, and went moodily home to bed.

We are not an early riser; but on the Wednesday morning a villanous clock that hangs in our room, whose alarum has obstinately refused to ring for many months, went off by itself at five in the morning, and roused us from a troubled slumber. In our anger we seized a boot that was within reach, and with a good aim entirely stopped its proceedings:—it will never ring more. Going to sleep again was out of the question. The morning was most lovely, and the bustle all over the house, even at that early hour, proved that the happy men who were going to Epsom had already commenced their preparations. Anon came an unwonted clatter of vehicles in the thoroughfare below; every instant a fresh pair of legs bounded up alternate stairs; and once in every ten minutes a knock was given at our door by one or the other of the floors, to borrow a corkscrew, a clothes-brush, a wicker-covered tumbler, a pepper-castor, or something of the kind. These annoyances were brought to a climax at seven o'clock by the intrusion of a wretched boy, who insisted upon leaving a raised *pâté*, which, he said, we had ordered and paid for the day before, at some pie-builder's in

the Strand. We sent a boot-jack after him down stairs in extreme wrath; forgetting at the moment that our own name being by no means exclusive or uncommon, there was a man on the ground-floor who revelled in the same felicitous cognomination.

That universal eccaleobion, the sun, had been hatching the countless events of the day into action for some hours—in plain terms, it was about ten o'clock—when we finished breakfast. By that time our neighbours had all departed, and a sense of overwhelming wretchedness stole over us. Robinson Crusoe on his uninhabited island, and the Ancient Mariner who shot the albatross, in his lonely boat,—Jacques Balmat, when he got to the top of Mont Blanc,—and Sinbad the Sailor, when he got to the bottom of the Diamond Valley,—Mr. Green, the aëronaut, up in a balloon at an altitude of twelve thousand feet,—and Mr. Deane, the diver, amidst the sea-bound relics of the Royal George,—Elizabeth Woodcock, when she was frozen in the snow,—the only Sunday occupant of a Bow-Street cell, having failed to obtain bail,—a Gresham lecturer—the last man of the season—may all have their peculiar ideas of solitude, but they were cheerful to our own loneliness. We were the left-behind of a pilgrim caravan,—the locomotive oasis of a vast desert!

After walking up and down our room for about half an hour, in the manner of a caged panther at the Surrey Zoological Gardens during the fireworks from St. Angelo, we determined to sally forth into the streets; and, mechanically following the sun, we bent

our steps towards the West. Several carriages on their way to Epsom passed us; we imagined their inmates looked upon us with pitying eyes, and perceived that we were completely within the rules of our own ill-temper. We felt almost ashamed of being seen, and we sought the retirement of by-courts and passages.

At the Regent Circus all was life and gaiety. The thoroughfare was literally blocked up with carriages about to start, on nearly all of which we recognised an acquaintance, who bawled out in a satirical and insulting manner, "I suppose we shall see you on the Downs." One even pushed his cruelty so far as to inform us that we should find lobster-salad after the race at their drag on the hill. They went off, and others arrived; we scarcely thought there were so many vehicles and horses in London as, until half-past twelve, collected between the County Fire-Office and Carlton Chambers. At length the very last turn-out rolled away down Regent Street; it seemed to be the tie that bound us to the world. "The last links were broken;" and when we had followed it with our eyes until it diminished in the distance, and turned round the corner of Pall Mall, we could have cried for very despondency.

The Quadrant was deserted as we strolled up it. Here and there two or three persons in thick boots, and badly-cut strapless trowsers, carrying dropsical umbrellas, were staring in at the shops; but these, and others of the same uninteresting class, constituted the sole occupants of the colonnade. We turned sulkily

into one of the billiard-rooms for distraction. There was no clicking of balls as we ascended the stairs; the public *salle* was unoccupied; the marker amusing himself, as markers always do, with countless endeavours to perpetrate impossible cannons. Our apparition did not interfere with his pastime. It was evident that he thought nothing of a man who could coolly walk into a billiard-room at the same instant that the horses were exercising in the Warren,—that we could be nobody worth caring for, or we should not be in London. He regarded us for a minute with a glance of mingled contempt and unconcern; then whistled part of "*Deh con te*" out of tune, made a red hazard, drank some beer from a pewter-pot that stood on the mantelpiece, and continued his sport.

The *trottoir* of Regent Street was equally lonely. It presented nothing but a line of unrelieved hot pavement, which blinded you to look at; over which, at certain intervals, a few individuals were endeavouring to strut their little hour in the absence of the usual dashing *flâneurs*, like the German company attempting Norma upon the same stage and with the same scenery and appointments that had whilom been graced by Adelaide Kemble and her vocal contemporaries.

We had heard a great deal about Catlin's American Indians,—the Mandans, Ojibbeways, Stumickosucks, and other euphonical tribes, and we determined upon paying them a visit at the Egyptian Hall, to carry on time. But the same unpleasantly pursued us,—the exhibition had closed the day before, and there was nothing to be seen but a diagram of the Missouri

Leviathan, and a notice that the room was to be let. As we turned away in sorrow, a Kew Bridge omnibus passed. Lucky idea! we had a pretty cousin at a young ladies' establishment at Turnham Green, and we would pay her a visit. "*C'est si gentil — d'avoir une belle cousine*," as Paul de Kock says: and, besides, perhaps we might see some of the other girls—who could tell? We hailed the omnibus, and, after waiting at the White Horse Cellar until we had inspected all the perambulating manufactures there offered for sale, we proceeded on our journey, and were finally put down at the seminary.

After knocking twice at the door, hearing a bell ring inside, and seeing divers heads *en papillotes* bob up over the front blinds, and then bob down again with most extraordinary celerity, we were allowed to enter, and were shown into a room that was the perfect picture of a school-parlour. There was a cabinet piano, (not for the pupils,) and a pair of globes; some chalk copies of French heads; a vase of dead flowers, in greenish water, on the table; and some worsted ones in a paper-basket on the cheffonier, planted in a bung wrapped round with frizzled green paper; straw spill-cases on the mantelpiece, and pasteboard card-racks at the sides, adorned with little square views of gentlemen's seats cut out of the last year's pocket-books, and stuck on with gum. These things, together with a small table, on which were displayed a stuffed bird, two blown-glass ships, a guitar pin-cushion, and a pen-wiper made of little round bits of coloured cloth, with a transfer card-case, completed the garniture of the

room,—not to omit two grape-jars, painted green, and covered with birds cut from chintz bed-furniture. The mistress chanced to be engaged for a few minutes,—schoolmistresses always are when you call. During which time we inspected the curiosities of the room; listened to the jingling of the practising piano through the wall, pitied the teacher, and then began to think what a god-send Bristol-board, perforated cards, and coloured floss-silk must have been to young ladies' establishments, until the mistress herself entered. Accumulation of despair! we were informed that, pursuant to agreement, some friends had called for our cousin that very morning about ten o'clock, to take her to Epsom! We made a most ungainly *congé* to the lady, and, quitting the house, savagely stopped an omnibus on the high-road, and, violently forcing our way into the interior, travelled back to London. We then wandered—we cannot tell how, to Hungerford Market; and, having looked at all the shrimps and periwinkles until we knew them by heart, we inspected the preparations for the foot-bridge, and then made a fourpenny tour to Vauxhall in the "Lightning" steamboat, returning in the "Thunder," by way of variety.

At last we found we were in the neighbourhood of some acquaintances, who had been looking somewhat cold upon us lately, because we had not called to pay our respects so often as we might have done. Lucky idea again! we would endeavour to wipe off the stain upon our character. We knocked at the door and awaited an answer. Two maid-servants looked out

from the open window of a drawing-room next door; a parrot swore at us from across the road; and a head elevated itself from the area, and gazing at us for a moment, disappeared again. It was quite plain that we were an object of curiosity in the street. But the knock remained unanswered, and we attacked the lion's head again, with an accompanying tug at the bell. After another delay an untidy woman opened the door about six inches, just enough to show us that the chain was up, and peering from the aperture inquired what we wanted. On answering the question by another, whether the mistress of the house was at home? we learnt that the whole party had "gone to Epsom," servants and all, and that she, the cook, was the only one left in the house. We insinuated a card between the door and the post, (which the woman received between her finger and thumb enveloped in her apron,) and rushed despairingly away.

The longest day, however, will come to an end; and evening at length arrived. We sauntered over to Kennington turnpike to see the crowds return; and after waiting there an hour, a carriage full of friends drew up close to where we were standing, its progress being interrupted by the ticket nuisance at the gate. There was a vacant place in the rumble, which, upon the invitation of the owner, we took possession of, heartily glad to have some one to speak to. We had barely taken our seat when another carriage drew up close to us—it was that of the people upon whom we had called during the day. One of the handsome girls of the family inquired how we had liked the

race. We were ashamed at the moment to confess that we had not been; and, not thinking that we had called at the house, we told her it was charmingly run. These good folks have since sent out invitations for an evening party, and we are not asked; we think they received our card on their return, and have imagined that we got somebody else to leave it, knowing that there was no chance of finding them at home.

Our other friends, on whose carriage we were, had all been winners, and were returning home in high spirits to a capital supper, to which they were good enough to request our company. But we stedfastly refused, and got down at Waterloo Bridge, feeling no inclination to join a party where all the conversation would necessarily turn upon an event which we knew nothing about. A comfortable repast in our own chambers, did not put us in better humour, and we retired to bed at an early hour, after the dullest day we ever remember to have spent; inwardly resolving never again to miss seeing the Derby run, even if we were compelled by circumstances to travel thither on the top of a ginger-beer cart.

A NIGHT IN THE ROYAL GEORGE.

A CONFESSION OF THE DEEP.

THE circumstances I am about to relate will do little to raise me in the opinion of the reader, into whose hands these papers may happen to fall. Awful and harrowing as were the events of that dreadful night, I can lay but small claim to mental boldness, in having met them as I did. Avarice—sordid, calculating avarice—drove me to the attempt, and I well deserved the total miscarriage of all my plans that succeeded.

Four years back, I was a clerk in one of the most respectable and influential houses in Portsmouth, receiving an excellent salary, and, upon the whole, most comfortably settled—far more so than the majority of the young men of my own station in the town; and yet I was not happy—far, far from it. I grumbled at the regularity of attention which my situation required; I deemed my labour ill paid; and I envied every one I met, whose lot in life appeared better cast than my own; little reflecting how many secret miseries poison the existences of those who appear, in public, most smiled upon by fortune.

The loss of the *Royal George* was ever a favourite topic of conversation with the people of Portsmouth, even when half a century had elapsed since the occurrence; and, indeed, the interest connected with the subject was constantly kept alive by the numerous projects and suggestions for raising the sunken vessel, or destroying the wreck, that needy speculators were perpetually starting. To myself, I will confess, the whole affair was one of deep and constant thought. I had heard the various accounts of the accident: of the heavy bags of gold that were on board at the time, to pay the seamen: of the watches, jewels, and other valuable articles, that the tradespeople had sent for sale; and all this was still there—there, within the cumbersome and sea-worn timbers of the ill-fated ship, lying as useless, at the bottom of the sea, and as comparatively worthless, as the rocks themselves.

Many, many evenings have I sat upon the shore, lulled into contemplation by the low ripple of the tide, when the last red gleam of the sun, ere he sank behind the Isle of Wight, illumined the spot where that majestic vessel went down; and wished I had power to roam over her sea-bound hoards for one short hour, and appropriate to myself all I could collect from her stores of value in that time. Many times have I longed for the power of those beings, in the *Arabian Nights*, who could live under water; and thought, with what selfish and unseen joy, I could then revel amidst the gold and treasures that the hulk contained!

It was somewhere about this period that a man came to Portsmouth, with permission from the Admiralty,

to carry on some experiments connected with the possibility of conducting different submarine operations, independent of the diving-bell. This incident changed the entire current of my thoughts. I watched his experiments with an intensity of interest, that, I am fain to believe, exceeded that of the person himself. I saw him descend in his dress, from a small vessel, to the wreck of the *Royal George*;—I noted the length of time he was enabled to remain under water;—I watched his return, with divers small articles—as oyster-shells, nails, &c., which he had picked from the wreck; and, from that period, I contemplated but one subject;—it was the idea of going down myself! It cost me many sleepless nights to bring my scheme to perfection; nor was the working out of my plans confined to night alone; I thought of it always. I neglected my business; I received endless reprimands from my employers for orders forgotten, and commissions uncared for; and, at last, I was discharged, because they found they could no longer trust me, from my undeviating forgetfulness.

As soon as I was turned away, I hired a small room in —— street, and commenced my operations. The first thing I did was to purchase a quantity of Macintosh's waterproof cloth, with which I intended to form my diving-dress. I contrived to cut out a very fair set of patterns, and these I got a journeyman tailor, who lodged in the house, to sew together; after which, I daubed the seams with Indian rubber dissolved in naphtha, some of which I obtained at the chemist's; and then, before it was dry, I pressed

strips of the fabric on them with a hot iron, by which I made the whole garment perfectly impermeable. My next task was to make the head-piece. To effect this, I procured some stout iron wire, and bent it into a sort of frame, of the shape I had seen the diver wear. I secured these different pieces together by twisting finer wire round them; and then covered the whole with the same waterproof cloth which I had used for the rest, fitting some pieces of glass carefully in front, to enable me to perceive objects around me. I fastened some roughly-shaped gloves and boots to the arms and legs of the dress, and fixed them in a similar manner to the seams; and when I had entirely completed the whole apparel, I put it on, and walked in it about my room the whole evening, delighted, beyond measure, at my contrivance. It cost me something considerable, with all my economy, it is true; but I looked upon it as the means of leading me to immense wealth, and I deemed the money invested in a highly profitable scheme.

My next object was to provide for the transmission of a supply of air to the interior of the hood, as I termed it, adequate to the support of respiration under water. Aided by the smattering of mechanical knowledge that I possessed, I was not long in fashioning a sort of air-pump, by adding some valves and stopcocks to an old garden-syringe, which I purchased at a broker's near my lodgings; and this I connected to the hood by long pipes of the cloth, closed in the same manner as the seams of my dress. I likewise procured a lantern, which I rendered waterproof by similar means;

and then I joined it to the head-piece by another pipe, having observed that there was, generally, a superfluity of air from the bubbles I had seen rising over the diver's head, which marked his situation in the water.

And now only one point remained to care about; but that was the most difficult—it was to seek a confederate. Not but that I believe I could have got many to join me in my fool-hardy enterprise; but they would have expected an equal share of the proceeds, and this it was not my intention to allow. Still, I could not do without a companion to mind the boat above, and, more especially, to supply me with air. I had, at one time, formed a wild scheme of borrowing a goat from an old man, at the edge of the common, who had trained it to run round in a wheel, and assist in making string; but the insanity of trusting my life to the operations of an animal, soon made me give up the scheme I had formed of constructing some rough machinery, to be turned by a similar wheel, which, acting upon a parallel motion, or rack and pinion, might work the pump. At last, chance threw the required assistance in my way. There was a poor creature living in the town at the time, named, or rather called, Harry Weston, whom I selected for my companion. He was not exactly in his right senses, nor was he completely an idiot; but at that nice balance between the two which kept him from being the sport of the street boys, whilst it gained the pity, or sympathy, of the charitable people in the neighbourhood. He got his living by carrying out parcels from the coach-offices to their final destination,

or by running on errands, and performing divers odd jobs for the inhabitants; and he generally bore a good character for sobriety and honesty. It was this harmless individual that I fixed upon as my associate. I brought him to my lodgings, and bound him down by the most horrible oaths I could invent to frighten him, and promises of large reward, to serve me as I should direct, without ever uttering a syllable to mortal of my schemes; and then, making an appointment with him for an evening in the next week, I gave him a trifling sum as an earnest of my future bounty. Poor wretch! he never lived to receive it.

The intervening days lagged slowly by, and the eventful night at last arrived. As soon as it was dusk, with the assistance of Weston, I carried my apparatus, piecemeal, down to the beach on Southsea common, and then concealed them in one of the bathing-machines which are always stationed there; leaving him to watch them whilst I repaired to the Point, for the purpose of procuring the boat I had bespoken a few days before. She was an old man-of-war's gig, with gunwales rather higher than ordinary, and low thwarts, which gave her a security better calculated for our operations. I pulled round to the beach, near the common, and took Weston and my contrivances on board, and then we started again for the scene of my venture. There was very little wind, and the sea was as calm as glass; which circumstances were, of course, in our favour. When we got to the buoy which marks the situation of the *Royal George*, we fastened the boat to it, and

I commenced arraying myself in my diving costume. This finished, with the exception of the headpiece, I threw overboard a rope-ladder, having two small grapnels attached to its inferior extremities; and when I had ascertained that these had laid hold of some portion of the wreck, I made fast the upper ends to one of the seats of the boat. I next sounded the depth with a lead-line, and arranged my water-proof pipes accordingly, by means of some taps I had purchased at a gas-fitters; allowing an extra length or two for my movements. In about half an hour from our first fixing the gig to the buoy, I had made all close and ready, and prepared to descend. I felt no timidity — the bare recollection of the wealth reported to be engulphed with the vessel, which I might, perhaps, accumulate, drove every other feeling from my mind.

With a last injunction for unremitting work and attention, on the part of Weston, I stepped on to the ladder, and commenced my task. What was my delight upon finding that my schemes answered, as I saw through the glass, in my hood, the green water ascend higher than the level of my face, and finally, close over my head, whilst my respiration continued free and unembarrassed. There was one unpleasant sensation, but this was not of sufficient consequence to annoy me. At every stroke of the pump above, that forced a fresh quantity of air down the pipe, I experienced a feeling of *tense* pain on the drums of my ears, of which I had heard the men in the diving-bells sometimes complain; but

this I in great measure alleviated, by making frequent attempts at deglutition. My lantern, also, preserved the flame within it admirably: and its trifling consumption of air tended, in a measure, to relieve the pressure in the head-piece. I descended gradually and carefully, step by step, and at last, to my great joy, stood on a portion of the wreck. I found the grapnels had caught on a large spar that lay completely across the ship, kept firmly in its place by a gun, which had, probably, rolled over it when the accident occurred. With some little caution I crawled along it; and, at length, stood upon the deck. And here, for the first time, I became aware of the singular assistance of my light. Everything around me was plainly discernible, when the rays, cast through a large bull's-eye, were directed towards the object, only appearing as if a dull, greenish mist encircled it. I well remember the stems of the masts, with their coating of barnacles—the masses of shell-work and weeds that incrusted the guns, still outwardly preserving their shape—the very bulwarks, with their rings of green and cankered metal attached; and the blackened pieces of timber that were grouped around me, from which myriads of strange polypi threw out their long streaming arms in quest of prey. The deck was nearly a foot deep in sand, and, as I had supposed, not level; but still, the declivity to larboard was not too steep to preclude my keeping a firm footing. An immense quantity of corroded blocks, tackle, &c., was lying about in confusion, enveloped by perfect groves of tall sea-

weed; and these floated about like monstrous snakes, twisting and undulating in all directions.

I cleared away a few trifling impediments with a light boat-hook, which I carried in my hand; and moved cautiously forward in the direction where I expected to find the entrance to the chief cabin. I was not long in reaching it, but experienced some little difficulty in descending the stairs that led to it, as the passage was partly choked up with sand and *debris* from the wreck. At the third step I dislodged some large mass from its position. By my light I perceived a number of fish, such as sand-eels and small crabs, that had been disturbed from it; and, directly afterwards, upon kicking it with my foot, I was horrified at perceiving a human skull, to which some scraps of colourless flesh and ligaments were still adhering, roll down the inclined plane of sand that covered the ladder, towards the door. My first impulse was to return immediately; but, reflecting that all I had striven for was probably within my grasp, my thirst for gain once more conquered every other feeling.

With some trouble I made my way into the cabin. The doors were open—they had probably been so at the time of the catastrophe, and the subsequent accumulation of sand and mud had kept them so. I drew the air-pipe down towards me, and found that I had still length enough to spare for my operations; at the same time, I was convinced that my assistant was diligently supplying me with the means of respiration. I was now in the centre of the cabin, and

an awful scene presented itself. Every portion of the wood-work, at least, as nearly as I could determine by approaching my lantern closely to it, was black, from the action of the sea; and, like the masts above, incrusted with groups of barnacles. The floor was a foot deep in sand; and on its surface lay more oblong heaps, which I discovered, upon examination, to be also human bodies, round whose half-devoured remains shreds of clothing still floated. I could not move a step without treading upon one; and each that I thus disturbed fell to pieces immediately, surrounding me with a cloud of its sickening particles, and numbers of huge shellfish, who were enjoying their unholy meal therefrom, and who crawled off, with their long spidery legs, in all directions.

Still, I came to no treasure:—I had fallen in with none of the bags of gold, which I heard were on board at the time of the accident. There were many corroded naval implements lying about; but these were not what I wanted. I examined every heap that rose above the general level of the floor, with the most diligent investigation, but without reward. Sometimes I exposed the tattered remnant of an article of clothing, a seaman's hat, a telescope, or something equally valueless to myself; but, more generally, similar objects to the above-mentioned fragments of mortality shocked me with their presence. At the side of the cabin was a small closet, having a glass door; and towards this I bent my way, thinking it might be the repository of some precious articles. But how was I horrified on approaching it! On

directing my light through its still unbroken panes, I saw a dreadful corpse, that gibbered and grinned directly in my face; it was the body of some poor creature, who had, perhaps, been forced in there at the first rush of the water, and the door closing upon him, had kept out the sand and marine insects, that everywhere else abounded. The sea-water had acted as a preservative, and the body still retained the perfect semblance of a human form; but the face was blanched and coddled — one of the eyes had dissolved, and the other was opaque, and apparently congealed; while the relaxed ligaments allowed the lower jaw to fall and rise with every vibration of the sea, in the mockery of a dreadful grin. The hair, too, floated in the water, giving a semblance of motion to the whole features, which wore an expression of hideous merriment.

Faint with terror and disgust, I turned from the loathsome spectacle, and moved slowly and laboriously away. I approached the table of the cabin; a half-opened drawer was at its extremity, and, when I had cleared away the envelope of sand, I discovered it was nearly filled with bags of coin. All, then, was accomplished: the long-coveted treasure lay, in greater part, beneath my grasp! I raised my lantern eagerly to inspect the contents, when, to my extreme terror, I perceived that there was water in it half way up the bull's-eye, and the light not half an inch above the surface. The dreadful anticipation of inevitable darkness now burst on me, and a moment of intense fear, amounting almost to stupefaction, succeeded. I

began hastily to collect the small canvass bags, and stow them in my girdle; but three remained, and I stretched my hand out to seize them. In the hurry and anxiety of the moment, I threw my lantern slightly out of the perpendicular,—the water within it immediately washed over the light, and it was extinguished!

* * * * *

I know not how the subsequent five minutes passed. The sensations of years of terror, agony, and the expectations of approaching death, were condensed in that period. My first recollection was, that I observed a gleam of light where the windows of the cabin were situated; but it was of the faintest kind. I afterwards ascertained that it was a moonlight night, and the beams had penetrated thus far through the sea; — but this was no guide for me. I was totally unconscious by what direction I had entered the cabin; and I did not dare to move unless towards these windows. Then I thought that Weston would tire at his work — that his strength would not allow him to keep pumping so long, whatever his will might be, and I should miserably perish. Anon, the thought came that I was alone—alone, amidst a crowd of dead bodies and hideous marine monsters—alone with that gibbering and awful corpse, whose face peered at me through the darkness, in my imagination, and pressed his clammy, soddened cheek against me—*alone, at the bottom of the sea!*

I gained one of the windows; it was open, or, rather, the frames had been carried away by the con-

stant action of the waves. I thought I would climb through it, and so ascend, for I was an excellent swimmer. But then the air-pipe kept me back; and it was even now becoming tight, as I reached the extent of its length. A new idea arose, bringing fresh hope with it, and I wondered I had not thought of it before:—I could use the pipe as a clue, and so return by following its course. I left the window, and prepared to make the attempt, when I felt a violent tug, that nearly pulled the head-piece from the rest of my dress. Another, and another, succeeded, and then, in an instant, I felt the tense air-pipe give way—it had broken!

But one resource was left: I clambered through the cabin window, and attempted to rise, but the pipe had caught some projection, and restrained me, and I already perceived that the supply of air was stopped. I seized a knife from my girdle, and cut the tube off close to my head. The water rushed into the hood as I performed this action, but I was enabled to rise directly, as the sea roared and bubbled in my ears, with the noise of thunder. I struck upwards, still keeping my knife in my hand; and in half a minute I had reached the surface. To rip up my hood, and cast it from me, was the work of an instant. As I regained my vision, I perceived, by the moonlight, that my boat was gone, but the buoy was still floating at its usual spot. Swimming towards it, I was enabled to recover myself, and take breath as I rested, hanging on to its ring. From the appearance of the distant vessels, near the beach,

which were riding at anchor, I saw it was high-water, and another fearful truth burst upon me. The rope-ladder, which the grapnels held fast to the wreck, had drawn the boat under as the tide rose, and, with it, my hapless assistant!

I felt at my girdle for the bags of gold; they were all gone, through the hasty manner in which I had secured them, and my struggles in coming to the surface. I tore my dress from me in raving passion, and cast it to the waves. In my under-clothes, which consisted of nothing but a common check shirt and a pair of coarse Holland trowsers, I swam to land; and, on reaching the stony beach, I sank on it in a swoon, overcome by my intense exertions.

I was found there the next morning, and carried to my lodgings. A long illness succeeded; — I kept my bed for three months, and arose a maniac. I was told I talked about the wreck, and its fearful contents, during my fever; but I found my attendants merely looked upon it as the raving of delirium. As time passed I recovered my reason; but the remembrance of the circumstances connected with my rash venture must embitter my life until its close. I procured a moderate appointment through the interest of some friends, and to-morrow I sail for Australia.

THE LAUDANUM PATIENT.

Mr. Cripps was one of the best tempered men at the hospital, wherein he filled the post of house-surgeon, always ready for a piece of fun when there was anything going on; and yet possessing sufficient tact and good sense to keep quiet when he thought it necessary for the support of the true dignity of his character. He was a universal favourite with all classes, both patients, surgeons, and pupils; for he was kind to the first, attentive to the second, and never refused to join in the amusements of the third, when not interfering with his own duties. He was, in fact, what every medical student ought to be. Not on one side a careless idler, who sneered at everything connected with study, and thought the chief happiness the world could give was to be found in a glass of brandy and water. Nor was he, on the other, one of those intense *potterers* who haunt the hospitals year after year, cringing to the officers, and thinking themselves above the pupils, with the sole hope of being at some very distant period elected assistant-surgeon — an aspiration which is never gratified. But he, Mr. Cripps, combined the best qualities of the two, and so kept very friendly with all. You could seldom go into his

room without finding one or two of the choicest men in the medical school lolling about upon his chairs, and taking everlasting lunches; indeed his quarters appeared a perpetual scene of bread, cheese, and half-and-half, which were mingled upon the table in admirable confusion with scalpels, stethoscopes, bones, and manuals of surgery and anatomy.

Mr. Cripps' rooms — or rather his room, for the bedchamber was only a long narrow accidental appendix to his sitting apartment—were on the first floor of the hospital, and in the immediate vicinity of two of the wards. A strong smell of stale tobacco pervaded the interior; and indeed it would have been much stronger had there been anything to retain it. But the carpet was so worn that it appeared to have been turned the wrong side upwards; and the pair of dingy window curtains had in all probability been hanging there ever since the hospital was first chartered; and now assumed a series of tints, varying in their colour from dirty buff to dull red.

The furniture was admirably in keeping with the chamber, being dark with age, and of a fashion unknown in the memory of the oldest second-hand broker in London. The chairs mostly suffered from rickets, and the sofa was particularly unsteady, in consequence of an unreduced dislocation of one of its four hip-joints, which was gradually wearing away a new socket for itself in a corner of the squab that formed its seat. There was an ancient bureau, in which Cripps kept his books; but the piece of furniture had lost its turned legs, which were supposed to have mortified at

a period lost in antiquity; and now it stood by being propped up against the ledge of the wainscot behind, and was in consequence christened by Mr. Cripps his "upholsterous biped." One of its doors suffered from paralysis of the hinges; and the other had an artificial joint, ingeniously made from an old bent probe, which allowed it to close and open with tolerable facility. The windows commanded a fine view of the hospital garden, with its perambulating patients, consisting of convalescent amputations, ameliorated squints, recovered operations for club feet, and last stages but one of œdema, who were perpetually crawling up and down its formal walks, and over the parallelogram of hard black earth, which was by courtesy denominated the grassplot. This area was bounded by the backs of the houses in the adjacent streets; all of whose occupants evinced indomitable perseverance in eternally washing their things at home, and then displaying them upon poles from their windows, where they fluttered all day long. By much observation, Mr. Cripps had become acquainted with a great deal of the domestic economy practised by his neighbours, through these signals. He knew perfectly when to look out for the appearance of the patchwork quilt, on the third floor of No. 12; and he discovered that the back attic of No. 7 possessed two pairs of sheets, which were washed in turns, being recognised by sundry patches and repairs.

He was sitting one morning in the surgery, waiting for some out-door patients to arrive, when the door opened, and Mr. Blake, a pupil of the hospital, having first thrust in a small portion of his head to

see that the coast was clear, propelled the rest of his body after it, and saluted Cripps with a wink of the right eye, intended to express the compliments of the morning.

"What 's the news, Cripps?" was the first question.

"Little enough from me," returned his friend. "My opinion of a house-surgeon is, that he 's two degrees worse off than a prisoner in the Queen's Bench."

"Well, you have not much longer to stay," replied Blake, seating himself at the table, and playing with some tooth instruments. "What a room of torture this is!" he continued, after a momentary gaze around the surgery, and at the different objects hanging about.

There certainly was a great display of all kinds of articles, that any one skilled in the art of ingeniously tormenting would have delighted to contemplate. Gags for obstinate poison-takers; keys, elevators, forceps, and punches for the odontalgists; caustic for touching up refractory excrescences; long savage-looking bistouries; deeply-insinuating probes, and scalpels; with knives, lancets, and directors of every size and capacity.

"There only wants one thing to render all this apparatus perfect," said Blake, as he looked round him.

"And what 's that?" asked Mr. Cripps.

"A twitch for the noses," replied Blake.

"I don't quite know what you mean."

"A twitch," returned Blake, "is a piece of broom-

stick with a string loop at the end, that you put over colts' noses, and screw up tight when they run rusty at being singed, or put into harness. You would find it a capital remedy for epistaxis."

"I don't doubt it," answered Cripps; "indeed, I think it would be a valuable addition to surgery. By the way, I 've formed a beautiful diagnosis lately."

"What about?" asked Blake.

"Between various accidents," returned the house-surgeon. "For instance, broken legs always come on a shutter; fractured ribs in a patent cab; and dislocated shoulders usually walk."

"And what good does that do you?"

"Oh, nothing particular — only if you see a casualty coming, you know what it is, and what to get ready."

"Then you had better be looking after your apparatus now," said Blake, "for here's an accident coming in."

In confirmation of his statement, a crowd of dirty little boys, surrounding a group of three persons, the middle one of whom was being supported by the other two, crossed the court of the hospital, and came up to the surgery. As the nurse opened the door to admit them, the whole posse pressed forwards to obtain entrance with the patient; and the place would have been certainly carried by storm had not Blake gone to the assistance of the nurse, and vigorously repelled the assailants with a straw *junk* — an instrument used in the treatment of fractures, and which he liberally dealt about the heads of the intruders.

"Now, then, missus,— what is it?" asked Cripps, when Blake had succeeded in closing the door and bolting it, addressing himself to a woman who had come in with the patient.

"He's pisened hisself with lodnum!" was the reply. Whereupon she began to moan after the most approved manner of poor people in a dilemma, thinking that she should have lived to have seen the day, and recollecting it was only last night he was saying, he meant to join the blessed Temperance.

"When did he take it?" asked Cripps, feeling in his waistcoat pocket for the key of his stomach-pump.

"Why, docthor," rejoined the woman, "last Januay twelvemonth—"

"When!" interrupted Blake, with some astonishment.

"Last Januay twelvemonth," continued the woman, "there was a benefit society formed at the Corner Pin public-house, and the members has some scursions on board the steam-boats—"

"My good woman," said Cripps; "I asked you when he took it;—can't you give me a simple answer?"

"I don't know, I don't know!" cried the woman, wringing the corner of her apron, as if she laboured under a belief that it was wet. "All I can tell is, I 'd been into Mrs. Watts' to help her wash, and when I come back the room was locked, and I looked through the keyhole, and there he was a sitting in an arm-chair with his hands hanging down just like a corpse. Oh, dear! oh, dear! what shall I do?"

"What makes you think he has taken laudanum?" asked Blake.

"I found this bottle on the floor," said the woman, producing an irregularly-shaped green phial with letters blown on it, and labelled "Laudanum—Poison."

"I don't think that 's opium," said Blake, smelling the bottle; "it 's more like lacquer for brass work."

"He 's evidently in a state of coma," replied Cripps; "and his breathing is anything but what I should like mine to be. Well, there 's only one plan — I suppose I had better perform a solo on the stomach-pump."

"And then we 'll give him a promenade without the concert, in the garden, to keep him awake," added Blake. "Get a basin, Surgery, and some warm water."

"I think he 's been sitting in the sun a little too much," observed the nurse addressed as 'Surgery,' with a knowing assent, as she tilted the kettle, implying by that delicate metaphor that the man was drunk.

The stomach-pump was soon in action, and the result convinced the students that there was a great deal more gin than laudanum in what the patient had taken. At the conclusion of the performance the man appeared a little relieved. He opened his eyes, rolled them heavily about, gave a sulky grunt, and tried to raise himself from the chair.

"Do you think he 'll recover, docthor?" asked the woman.

"I think so," said Cripps; "but he will require

great care. Now, we must mind that he does not go to sleep again; and for that purpose he must be walked gently round the garden."

"You can stay here until we return," said Blake to the woman. And then supporting the patient with Cripps' aid, they led him into the garden.

"How are you, old fireworks?" asked Blake, when they got out of earshot.

"I 'm the Marquis of Herne Bay, there and back; and Prince George of Peckham and Camberwell," growled the man, in the true accents of intoxication.

"Yes, yes! we know all that," said Blake. 'Don't you think a little dash of preissnitz would do him good, Cripps?"

"I should say so, decidedly," replied the house-surgeon; "and if I have a preference, it should be fresh from the pump."

Fortunately for their good intentions, there was a pump in the garden, principally used for the purpose of irrigating the esculent vegetables which grew there for the consumption of the matron, secretary, and house-apothecary; as well as for strengthening weak ligaments, and relaxed joints by its bracing stream. Towards this point Blake and Cripps conducted their patient, and seating him opposite to it, upon the ground, propped up by the garden-roller, the first named gentleman worked at the handle, whilst the latter interrupted the stream with his hand, jerking it copiously into the face of their victim, until he was wet through and through.

"Now, I think, we had better dry him," said Blake, when they had persevered in this innocent recreation for about five minutes. Upon which—in spite of the struggles and remonstrances of the man, who having been in reality only dead-drunk, was coming to his senses again very quickly—Cripps and his companion took him by the arms, and ran him round and round the garden, until nearly every bit of breath was out of his body; and they themselves quite overcome with fatigue.

"Will you ever do it again?" asked Cripps, with as serious a face as he could command.

"Never, no more, s'help me eversomuch," was the answer. "I 'll be a teetotaller,—if I don't I 'm—"

"Hush!" cried Blake gravely. "Recollect how you have been snatched from the jaws of death by our united efforts. How came you to get drunk so early in the morning?"

"It 's all along of the scursion as I was steward for," replied the man. "I had the grog to keep and couldn't help it."

"And how did you come by this bottle?" asked Cripps, taking the laudanum phial from his pocket.

"I keeps lacquer in it," was the answer; "I 'm a gilder by trade."

"I said it was!" cried Blake, quite delighted at his prognosis; "I knew it all the while."

"How the deuce did you know what lacquer was?" asked Cripps.

"I was with a dentist once," replied Blake; "and

we used it to set off the brass things that he kept in a little case on his street-door post, and made the people believe were gold."

The man being pronounced recovered, was now led back to the surgery. He departed in a short time with the woman, accompanied by the cheers of such little boys as had waited outside the whole time, and looking very pale and repentant. It seems, however, that the ordeal he had undergone was not without its effect; for, three days afterwards, Blake saw him with a high clean shirt-collar, and a blue bow on his hat, entering the Temperance Coffee House, which was close to the hospital.

A FRENCH SCHOOL.

THE continual minor annoyances, and ludicrous mistakes to which our knowledge of English *academy French* perpetually subjected us in Paris, induced us to think about some means of acquiring the language, not as we learn it here, but as they speak it in France. We applied to several friends, touching the best means of attaining this end, and everybody said, "Go into a school for a short time, it is your best way." Thinking upon the old adage, which teaches us that what everybody says must be right, we accordingly made up our minds to become a schoolboy once more; and started one morning in quest of an "*institution*" likely to suit our purpose. We called at several, but none of the principals had the least idea of what a parlour-boarder meant, at least, in our sense of the word; and after splitting our boots to pieces in running up and down the Rue D'Enfer, (whose miserably unpaved state entirely contradicts the received opinion that the "descensus averni" is so easy, and shows that Virgil had not Paris in his eye when he wrote the Æneid,) we at length closed with one in the Faubourg St. Jacques; where we stipulated to have a bedroom to ourselves, to dine with the master, and to be in-

structed in the French language, for one hundred francs per month. Now, we had three reasons for doing this. Firstly, it was cheap, including the tuition, of which we have stated we stood in great need; for like the Prioress, although we spoke the tongue

> "Fayre and fetisly
> After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> Yet Frenche of Paris was to us unknowe;"

secondly, it was near the Barrière du Mont Parnasse, to whose amusements upon fête days we had a great predilection; and lastly, we blush to own our cowardice, the *élèves* were all little boys, whom we could thrash into subjection, if they were impudent, or hallooed after us "*Rosbif Anglais*," or any other of the entertaining polyglot witticisms, which the said little boys of Paris, there called *gamins*, are apt to indulge in at the expense of our countrymen.

It was on a wet dirty day, at the commencement of November, that we left our lodgings at the Hôtel Corneille, Place de L'Odeon, and, hiring a porter at the corner of the Rue Racine, paddled up the always dirty, never-ending Rue St. Jacques, to our new abode. On arriving we entered the great gates, with which all French schools are embellished, to make them look as much like prisons as possible, and immediately carried our effects to our bedroom. This was a closet about eight feet square, with a tiled floor; and all its furniture was comprised in a little wooden bedstead, like an elongated tray-stand, destitute of any kind of

furniture, and not overladen with clothes; a deal chair, and a corresponding table, on which was an oval saucer to wash in, and a half-pint jug for water, with a small cotton towel. Had we been given to the study of astronomy, the room would have had many advantages, for it was ingeniously lighted by a window in the ceiling, which in fine weather illuminated our chamber tolerably well, but in the event of a heavy fall of snow left us in total darkness. It was late in the evening when we arrived, so we went to bed at once, supplying the want of sufficient covering to the bed by an English great coat spread over the counterpane, and a carpet-bag, emptied of its contents, made a sort of mat to lay on the ground and stand upon, whilst we undressed.

Long before daylight the next morning, we were aroused from our slumbers by the ringing of a singularly discordant bell, which called the poor little devils of *élèves* to the commencement of their studies. We heard much yawning and scrambling after clothes; and then a silent and measured step as the usher assembled them, two and two, to march down stairs to school. About seven, the cook of the establishment—a dirty fellow, in a dirtier white nightcap—brought us a cup of milk, and a piece of bread, which we were informed was to be our *first* breakfast, the other taking place at half-past eleven. Unfortunately for us, we always had a great aversion to bread and milk; although we remembered in our infancy to have possessed a book of nursery-rhymes, written by some anonymous poet of most fertile invention, wherein there was a picture of

a little child with very curly hair dragging a respectable female, who looked something between a barmaid and a sunday-school teacher, towards a cow feeding in a romantic meadow; and moreover some lines, which commenced, as well as our memory serves us,

> "Thank you, pretty cow, that made,
> Pleasant milk, to soak my bread;"

followed by some well-founded cautions to the animal not to chew hemlock, and other rank weeds; still, we repeat, in spite of all these associations of childhood, we do not like bread and milk. So when we found this was all we were to be allowed before noon, we were out of temper; and getting up very cross, we sauntered down into the playground to inspect our new residence.

The reader must imagine a large court, enclosed on three sides by buildings and walls, and on the fourth by some palings, which separated it from the garden. The edifices on the right hand were divided into numerous little cells, each having a door, and these were dignified by titles placed over the said doors, for the sole purpose, it appeared, of parents and friends to read. The first was called "SALLE DE MUSIQUE;" and, in consequence, was fitted up with a cistern and leaden trough, wherein the *élèves* performed their morning ablutions, when there chanced to be any water. Next to this was the "SALLE DE DESSIN," or drawing-room, as we called it; and some empty easels, with a very rickety form or two, showed that a great deal went on there. Then came the "CLASSE," or school-

room, where the *élèves* studied, under the surveillance of two ushers, who ordained a rigid silence amongst their pupils, save and except at such times as the ushers were on duty as national guards. On the other side of the court were the dwelling-house and bed-rooms, with the "REFECTOIRE" of the pupils, where they fed; and in the centre of the playground, which, from having two trees in it, was denominated the Park, were divers gymnastic poles and bars, and a deep well, which supplied the establishment with water, when anybody was at leisure to wind it up,—an operation of about half an hour.

We were tolerably hungry by eleven o'clock, and were not sorry to hear the bell ring for the pupil's breakfast, as we knew our own would follow. The *élèves* silently marched two and two into the room, and took their places at two long tables, where each boy had a fork, cup, and napkin laid for him—table-cloths and knives were unknown. An allowance of *potage*, composed of cabbage-water, and bits of bread, was first served out to each; after that they were allowed some *vin ordinaire* and water;—but such wine! The only thing we could compare it to was ink and hard table-beer mixed together; and when this was well diluted with water, it may be conceived how delicious it was. A course of boiled *spinach* came next, and the breakfast concluded by a dab of currant jam being distributed to each, to be eaten with their bread, of which, however, there was an unlimited supply. This meal was repeated at five o'clock, with such agreeable variations as the taste of the cook directed, and called

dinner; but beyond small hard pieces of boiled beef, and little bits of calf's liver, we did not see much meat. The *élèves* themselves had none of the spirit of English schoolboys, and indeed it was not to be wondered at, for we could not help contrasting the washy mess they were eating to the wholesome roast and boiled joints of our schools. They appeared to have no regular games or toys of their own, and all their playtime was spent in running after one another, with no other end, that we could perceive, than to keep themselves warm; for although the weather was desperately severe, there were no fires, or even fire-places, in some of the school-rooms. They never inflicted corporal punishment; but offenders were ordered to stand against some particular tree for half an hour, or be deprived of a dish at dinner. We thought it would have had a better effect to have fed them, and thrashed them well.

As may be imagined, from thus early rising, they were generally pretty well fatigued at night; and they were always in a deep sleep when we went to bed. As the way to our own chamber lay through that of the *élèves*, we had frequent opportunities of inspecting it. It was a large bare room, with the beds arranged round it and down the middle; and bore a close resemblance to the dormitory of a union workhouse. Some of the boys had little round mats by the beds, to stand upon and keep their feet from the cold glazed-tile floor; but the majority, who could not afford to *hire* these luxuries of the master of the school, got on as well as they could without them. A dim and solitary lamp

burnt all night in the chamber, barely lighting its extreme ends; not an article of furniture but the beds themselves was in the room, with the exception of one chair for the usher; and the windows all closed with that unattractive irreconcilability, which is only known to the windows of the Continent.

We contrived to get through a month at our "*institution*," and then we left. We had, it is true, picked up a good deal of French; but in point of expense we had not saved much, for—the truth must out—we never got enough to eat; and in consequence generally dined again at the nearest *restaurateur's*. Nay, more than once, we detected ourselves eating broiled herrings at a wine shop outside the Barrière d'Arcueil.

A LEGEND OF WINDSOR FOREST.

ONCE upon a time,—for we are writing an old English story, and we must begin in the old English style,—once upon a time, then, there resided three brothers in an ancient but withal goodlie mansion, that was built in the midst of one of the greenest knolls of trees in Windsor Forest. The exact date of their existence is not known, for the chronicles we write from have not been over particular on that point; but we are certain that it was a long time ago, for there were then many, many miles of leafy and uninterrupted verdure in the forest, and long deep glades of oaks and beeches, that met overhead, and scarcely permitted the sun to throw his rays through their gothic arches upon the smooth turf below, except in gay and dancing beams, when the wind played with their green branches and moved them gently on one side. A fair and goodly expanse of noble trees, and a broad track of thick underwood was the merry forest at that time. Those hamlets that were in being upon its confines, were not, as they are now, surrounded by large pastures and level roads, but

they lay quite embosomed in the foliage; and it was pleasant to see their little church spires peeping out above the trees, as they glittered in the warm and bright sunlight of a summer afternoon. All was quiet and repose; and if the solitude of the greenwood was ever disturbed, it could be only by the jovial train of hunters in Lincoln green, who sometimes hurried along its avenues, making the glades ring again with the sounds of their horns and merriment.

But amongst all the jolly green-coated men who rode whooping, and blowing, and clanging, through the coverts, none had lighter hearts or surer aims than our three brothers. They had been left their own masters at an early age; and with little to think of, and less to care about, a fine life they led. Every morning they would saddle their horses, and turn out to hunt all day long; and, when they returned home at night, they would bring with them their companions of the chase, and keep up such orgies at their house, that the mavis had generally begun to warble in the thickets, in honour of the rising sun, long before they thought of parting. But this was not all. Sometimes in the summer, they would lock up their doors, and, taking their spears and dogs with them, would go and pass whole days together in the forest, in company with the same roysterers, returning only to procure fresh flagons of wine for the evening banquet. A merry time that was which they spent in the green woods. They killed their game, and cooked it themselves over a fire kindled on the ground; and after that they

drank, and sang, and frolicked about upon the grass around the embers, until the very fairies, who existed at that period, and who, from time immemorial, have been connected with trees, turf, and toadstools, took fright at their uproarious mirth, and ran and tumbled one over the other down the glen to some more quiet spot, well knowing that they could have no influence over such careless and independent mortals. Sometimes, to be sure, out of spite, when the brothers and their friends had tippled too much sack, the little spirits would venture to approach, creeping under the moss, and hiding from one harebell to another; and then they would play them such pranks, that the very trees appeared to increase in number, and turn round before them; which circumstance the brothers always attributed to the fact of their having eaten too much venison, and so overloaded their stomachs. Even at the remote period we are writing of, men sought to attribute the eccentric imaginary whizzlegig, which spun before their eyes as they closed them to go to sleep, rather to what they had eaten than to what they had drunk.

If any difference existed in the characters of the three brothers, it certainly was, that the youngest was more sentimental and refined in his feelings than the others. He, doubtless, partook of the disposition of all youngest brothers in old legends and fairy tales, who are generally the heroes of the story, and get through all their scrapes with the best possible reflections on their own characters. Not that he hung back

from joining in the amusements of the others, for his wine-cup was always the best filled, and his laugh the loudest of the forest circle; but he would sometimes fall into sad fits of abstraction during their banquets, or wander quite away by himself to some secluded part of the greenwood, where his companions would find him, sitting in deep thought under some old tree, engaged in listlessly cutting his arrows to pieces, or some equally profitable and industrious amusement. Had the other brothers ever thought that there was such a thing as love in the world, beyond the reasonable affection a man may be supposed to possess for his horse, or merlin, or dogs, or sisters, or other members of his family, they would probably have divined the cause; but, as it was, they never dreamt of such a thing; and Mark himself, for so was the youngest called, although he was continually dreaming of a pair of bright eyes he had encountered one day in the forest, was not quite sure he had got his own consent, leaving alone the lady's. Marriage, and the future, were very well for older heads to think about, but what were they to him? He was young, and handsome, and brave—the world smiled on him with its eyes of sunshine; and all was gay and cloudless around him. Alas! that the bright and happy thoughts with which youth clothes its imagination, endure not through our life! What a beaming paradise would our beautiful earth otherwise become!

Things were in this state, when, one fine evening in autumn, our three brothers met under their accus-

tomed tree, and commenced the old story of cooking, eating, and drinking, over again. They had fallen in with good luck that day in the chase, and, in consequence, their spirits were running in a most happy vein, to which jollity potent draughts of old wine, no doubt added. But we cannot eat and drink *à perpétuité*, as the French tombstones have it; and, accordingly, the two eldest gradually composed themselves to slumber away the fumes of their cups, while Mark, finding he could not go to sleep so soon, (according to the established law of lovers, who ought always to lie awake all night,) was indulging in his usual train of thought, and indolently poking about the embers of the fire with his spear, for want of better amusement. Suddenly, he thought he perceived some motion in an old oak that confronted him; and, as he watched closer, to his great wonder, the tree gradually resolved itself into the outlines of a human form. The large excrescence at the top of the trunk, took some sort of resemblance to regular features; the two lower branches dropped down in the form of arms, and the gnarled and knotty roots, at least as much of them as appeared above ground, formed themselves into two club feet.

"Glad to see you," said the strange figure to Mark, in a tone of the utmost familiarity, at the same time winking one of his knots.

Mark's first impulse upon being so oddly addressed, after having opened his eyes very widely indeed, was to attempt to arouse his brothers; which feat he was

about to perform by the summary process of throwing his spear at them, when the figure continued :—

"Don't wake your brothers; my business is with you, and you alone, and therefore they may sleep on for that;" and there was something so excessively good-tempered in the old tree's face, that Mark paused, and took courage to inquire "whom he had the pleasure of addressing."

"You may well ask," said the figure. "I am the guardian spirit of Windsor Forest, and every living thing that grows upon it is under my protection, from the oaks to the daisies."

"You must have a great charge, then," said Mark, gaining courage as he spoke — "a very great charge."

"Ah!" returned the spirit, in a tone of weariness, "you may say that. The old oaks are quiet and still enough for such tough weather-beaten fellows; but the young saplings and beeches are sad wild dogs, and I have very little power over the ferns—they run everywhere. Will you oblige me by moving that smoky mouldering log of wood a little further off? it irritates my throat;" and hereupon the gnome fell into such a fit of coughing, that he got quite red in the bark; and the very birds that were roosting in the branches of his wig, flew whirring off with such a noise, you would have thought an hundred flags, each as big as the one on the Round Tower, were fluttering around him. Mark pushed the offending ember to a distance with his heel, and then waited for what next the spirit had to say.

"Your companions are jovial fellows," continued the

oak; "very jovial fellows, indeed, but their merriment must come to an end some day. These things cannot last for ever; for were all my acorns turned into wine-casks, you would drain them dry at last. You, yourself, Mark, are getting on in years, and cannot expect to lead this life always."

"But why have you pitched upon me, above all others, to give this advice to?" inquired Mark, half inclined to be angry.

"Because," returned the gnome, "you are the most reasonable of the party. You are gayest also, it is true; but the day will come when you will be sleeping quietly beneath the turf, unwept and forgotten; and yet the old forest trees around you will flourish the same as ever."

"But we are leading a very pleasant life in the merry greenwood," replied Mark.

"Ay, but it is a useless one. You are sent on earth for other ends beyond your own amusement, and long and joyous as your life appears in anticipation, it is but an atom in the world of eternity — an acorn in a vast and mighty forest. Are you versed in history?" asked the oak, pushing back some misletoe from his eyes, and assuming a scholastic air.

Mark returned no answer: his whole library was comprised in an old illuminated missal, which he could not read; for at the period we are writing about, (*i. e.* "once upon a time,") education was not in a very flourishing state, nor had it been attempted to make reading uneasy, by pushing everybody up the ladder of learning against their will.

"Scenes have occurred," continued the spirit, "of greater import than any you have ever been engaged in, and on the confines of this forest, too: but they will be forgotten in time, as your names also will pass away. Have you any wish to see the past?"

"I have more to see the future," returned Mark.

"As mortals generally have," replied the oak. "And yet the misery which anticipated grief would occasion, would be but poorly recompensed by the foreseen joy."

"Indeed," said Mark, "I never balanced those chances before; but I begin to think that you are right."

"And *I* know I am," returned his visitor. "But you shall see all—the past, present, and to come. Mount my branches, and do not bruise me too much in climbing up, for I cannot afford to lose sap as I used to do."

At any other time, Mark would have hesitated, but conversation had established a sort of intimacy between him and his quaint companion; so he carefully mounted the trunk, and seated himself among the first branches. He had no sooner done so, than the oak gradually shot up far above the level of the other forest trees; and then a dense mist rose all around him, breaking through the leafy foliage, like the smoke creeping through the top bundle of wood upon first lighting a fire. By degrees it cleared off again, and the space formed by its opening became lighter and lighter, until it was as bright as if a thousand Bude lights had been shining on it: only, in those days, there was no New House of Commons, nor Polytech-

nic Institution—each equally celebrated for its natural magic and droll illusions.

"Attend!" said the oak, whose odd head had kept close to Mark all the time. "We are about to shew you scenes that have long since been acted, and that will be in future times. Do not let a single picture escape you!"

As he spoke the mist entirely rolled away, and discovered the forest and its surrounding country, as one would imagine it seen from a considerable elevation, under the cheering influence of a bright summer morning. In the centre stood the fair Castle, and the silvery Thames was creeping along the meadows in the vicinity, washing the then circumscribed walls with its pure and gentle wave. The gothic spires of Burnham Abbey were just visible above the surrounding foliage; and the sound of the old Saxon bells chiming to matins, floated gently on the wind, over the green and fresh plains, encompassing the few cottages, which, in after times, formed the village of Dorney. Further out in the goodly panorama, Runymede stretched its verdant expanse along the banks of the river, with the little town of Egham rising above the brow of the hill that overlooked it; and beyond this the proud monastery of Chertsey appeared in the distance, rearing its princely towers over the few rustic buildings that surrounded it. A long array of tall and goodly trees were gently waving their leafy branches over the rich pastures which they shadowed; and the whole space was dotted by numerous little villages, unassuming hostelries, and stately mansions, that have long since mouldered to

decay—the ploughshare alone serving to uncover their remains, and give evidence that such buildings ever were.

As Mark gazed with admiration upon the pleasant scene which lay extended at his feet, the outlines gradually became less distinct, and then blended themselves with each other into new forms; but by a change perfectly imperceptible. The distant objects faded away entirely, and the Castle extended and enlarged its walls, which, still increasing, appeared to close around him like the wondrous images of magic. He seemed to be standing in the court-yard, and the Round Tower, then but slightly elevated above the surrounding turrets, was before him, glowing in the rich and yellow tint of an autumnal sunset. A fair and gentle girl was wandering in the *parterre* of the little verdant enclosure at the foot of the mount; she was so delicately formed, and withal so beautiful, as to seem some lovely spirit, under whose care the exquisite and varied offsprings of the teeming earth were placed —herself the fairest. She held a letter in her hand, which, in the absence of other means, she had secured with a slight tress of her long silky hair; and she was anxiously gazing at a latticed window of the tower, as if in expectation of some appointed signal. Shortly, the casement opened, and a young cavalier presented himself, over whose pale, yet handsome features, a bright gleam of joy radiated, as he saw his heart's fair idol in the garden beneath. He hastily let down a silken line, to which the lady attached the letter, and, drawing it up again with the same rapidity, he kissed

his hand and withdrew, as the measured tramp of the men-at-arms upon the ramparts warned him of their approach. We have observed, Mark's knowledge of history was rather limited: had it not been so, he might have known that the unfortunate James I. of Scotland, was somtyme a prisoner in the keep of Windsor Castle, and that from his lone apartment he wooed and won the Lady Jane Beaufort.

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The neighing of the heavily-caparisoned war-horse, the hoarse bray of the clarion, the clanging of richly-embossed armour, and a long glittering array of battle troops, fluttering pennons, and waving plumes, succeeded to the scene of love and captivity that had, but e'en now, attracted Mark's attention. Surrounded by a natural amphitheatre of wooded hills, and supported by the branches of a huge oak, whose gnarled and misshapen roots grew towards a majestic river flowing beneath it, a gorgeous and emblazoned tent was shading a warlike party from the sun's rays. At a table in the centre of the group, stood a man of high and noble bearing, encased in complete armour—the crown upon his helmet alone serving to shew that he was a King of England. But there was little respect shewn to his royalty; for warriors of stern and haughty demeanour had surrounded him, and appeared to be compelling him to sign a document that was lying on the table. He would willingly have refused; yet, as he gazed upon the broad plain before him, covered with thousands of stalwart men, and saw their long-continued lines still shining amidst the more distant foliage of

the hill and the country far beyond, he became too well aware of the powerful force opposed against him, and he knew that the exasperated barons, who were standing firm and resolute around his *dais*, would not be again thwarted. With an ill-suppressed emotion of powerless rage, he signed the parchment; and the loud and prolonged shout, which rang far and wide, echoing over hill and plain, until the forest groves caught up the sound, starting the deer from its covert, proclaimed that the charter of England's liberty had received its monarch's signature on Runymede.

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The bright sunlight, under whose influence Mark had viewed the preceding vision, now faded away, and the approaching twilight appeared to be gradually stealing over the narrow and darkening streets of a small town. Numbers of the inhabitants had collected together in the open space, some pacing to and fro in a restless anxiety, and others debating in little groups, with much apparent energy of discourse; while the solemn voice of a monastery bell was sweeping over the adjacent country, with mournful and protracted tollings. Presently, a long train of monks was visible at the distant end of the street, bearing lighted torches in their hands; and the tread, as of a large company, became audible. On they came—soldiers, monks, and choristers—preceding a gorgeous bier, which now wound its course along a causeway, towards the monastery gate, and then entered that edifice, followed by a numerous train of people, who pressed eagerly after it. Ere long, the corpse was placed on tressels before

the altar, and the "*De profundis*" began to peal through the lofty aisles. It was an imposing sight, that beautiful abbey, and the torches cast a lurid and fitful gleam upon the polished armour and silken scarfs suspended round its walls, whose owners had long slept beneath the hollow pavement. But the hymn soon stopped; and then the Abbot, an austere and holy man, arose, and called the attention of the multitude to the corpse before them. Its features were distorted, and the dim blue eyes were open, with an expression that shewed the parting struggle to have been severe. A small clot of blood had oozed through the cere-cloth, in which the body was swathed, and trickled slowly on the bier; a drooping crimson rose lay on its marble brow, and a diadem was bound, as if in mockery, upon the lifeless forehead. The people listened to the address of the Abbot with respectful quietude; but a sound far different to prayer arose, when he told them that the body now brought to Chertsey Monastery for interment, was that of their mild and gentle, but ill-fated monarch, Henry of Lancaster.

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The scene again changed; but this time it was the musical and joyous sound of woman's laughter that fell upon Mark's ear, instead of the angry excitement he had just witnessed. The locality was again at the river's side, and on a smooth green plain, encompassed by a belt of fine old trees;—those of our own time would not have recognised Datchet Mead in the field before them. A couple of stout serving-men, clad in

blue hose and buff jerkins, were toiling with a buck-basket towards the bank of the river; and the occasional distrustful visage of a fat and jolly reveller, appeared, above the heap of linen that enveloped him, too plainly apprehensive of his immersion in the water, which presently took place. In the distance, two fair dames were watching their trusty servitors with ill-suppressed glee, and their eyes were sparkling with mischief-loving wickedness. Still further on stood a man regarding the group, whose high intellectual forehead, piercing eye, and wonderfully expressive countenance, betokened him to be of no ordinary mind. He ever and anon penned some lines upon his tablets, as if to describe the mirth-provoking scene. The deer-stalker of Stratford-upon-Avon had become the Queen's favourite, and he was collecting subjects for her amusement.

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As the last tableau faded away, a drowsiness stole over Mark's spirit; and when he next came to himself the sun had not risen, but day was about to break, and the solitary note of the early bird alone echoed through the still forest. Mark rubbed his eyes, and endeavoured to collect the incidents of the night. His brothers were still sleeping around him, and opposite to him was the old tree, with which he had held such strange converse during the night; the empty drinking-horns were strewn upon the ground, as they had been left the evening before; his hunting-spear was still at his side; in fact, everything was as it ought to have been. Nevertheless, his visions had

left a strange impression on his mind, that he could not well shake off; and when his brothers arose and went to join the chase again, Mark excused himself on the ground of indisposition; yet, as soon as they had departed, he bent his way towards a totally different part of the forest.

Time passed on, and two years after these events, Mark was reclining one evening under the old tree, once more at the trysting-place of other days and former revels; but now he was not alone. A female, radiant with all the fascinations of those potent philtres—youth and loveliness—was seated by his side, playing with the long chestnut hair, which now fell smoothly and gracefully over his shoulders; and, upon the turf before them, a little cherub-faced infant was toying with the daisies that peeped through the moss to do homage to the spring. The old oak's advice had not been without effect, for Mark was married; and his brothers themselves were also in a much fairer way of having their names handed down to posterity, than any of their wild freaks or dare-devil fancies would ever have done. The old mansion was put in order, and the number of dogs and horses diminished, as its other occupants increased. The noisy gentlemen in yellow boots, who had been accustomed to come whenever they liked, and whoop, and shout, and sing, and drink the brothers' wine, were compelled to find some other quarters; and in a little time their tumultuous orgies were supplanted by the tiny prattle of infancy, repeating the homely old English distich, from the illuminated manuscript, which, handed from one generation to

another, may be at present (at least for aught we know) quietly reposing in musty indolence on the venerable shelves of the library of Eton College.

Courteous reader, (or kind reader, or gentle reader, or wearied reader, or any other epithet you like to apply to yourself, in consonance with your present disposition,) all fairy tales should have a "ryght pleasant and moral ende;" and so, in the name of all the young ladies whose abodes are visible from the summit of the Round Tower, we beg to tell our uproarious merry-making bachelor friends, that there still exist as many fair faces and saucy laughing eyes about Windsor Forest, as there were "once upon a time," who may possibly instruct them as to the best plan (in the words of the real Great Unknown—the celebrated anonymous author of "Mother Bunch, and the White Cat,") "of living happy all the rest of their days until they die."

HINTS TO THE NEWSPAPERS.

It has always appeared to us, that there must be a great waste of time amongst the compositors of the newspaper offices—that industrious, knowledge-spreading class, who consume the greater part of the night in the not very exciting employment of twitching little oblong bits of metal out of square compartments, to form certain words and paragraphs, with a quickness only equalled, both in appearance and rapidity by a pigeon pecking up peas; whilst everybody else, who is to benefit by their labours on the morrow, is comfortably asleep in bed, (or at least ought to be,) perfectly unconscious of the preparation going on for the next journal; unless, indeed, they reside where a steam-engine keeps up the most pleasing accompaniment to their waking reveries, in a noise varying between a rattle and a bang, with the most determined and unflinching perseverance.

And how ungrateful, after all this turmoil, is the majority of the readers! After looking over eight-and-forty columns of varied information, each nearly two feet long by two inches and three quarters broad, none of which has appeared in print before—after reading the despatches from all parts of the world, without reflecting upon the miles that the copy has tra-

velled, the changes from lumbering *malle-postes* to rickety steamers, the hazardous and rapid journey over bad roads, dangerous passes, and various alternations of heat, snow, desert, and inundation, that the couriers have come through—these novelty-thirsting wonder-seekers tell their friends "there is nothing in the paper."

Now, we have thought upon a plan to abridge, in some measure, the labours of the compositor; and we call upon the typefounders generally for their strenuous co-operation to work out our scheme. The Chinese have no alphabet—at least, we believe not; but they have two or three millions of queer characters, no doubt very easily learnt by those who have a twist that way, fashioned like a conglomeration of dislocated Hebrew, each of which we are told signifies certain objects or sentences, which must undoubtedly save much time in putting together ("setting up" we believe to be more technical,) the readable portion of a book. We have carefully noted down, in commencing, a few sentences which we have an idea might be executed in the same style by a stereotyping process, or any other that might be thought most convenient by the founder. We only throw these out as hints, and leave it to the trade to improve upon them. Perfection cannot be expected at once in any line, but must be reached by degrees. The Marquis of Worcester, when he cooked his own dinner in the dungeons of the Tower, and found out the power of steam in blowing off the tight lid of the ill-made stew-pan with which the gaoler of the time had furnished him, little thought

that this discovered property of hot water would gradually improve, until larger stew-pans, on an elaborate and complicated plan, would send people to all parts of the world—sometimes even clean out of it—in less time than the imprisoned nobleman could eat the meal he had been so philosophically preparing. Everything is progressive — electro-magnetism, quarter-day, the moon, glaciers, intoxication, rust, and hard table-beer; and we trust that the plan, of which we now present the world with a mere outline, may lay the foundation of a new era in the printing of newspapers. These, then, are at present a few of our principal sentences, which we think might with advantage be all cast in one piece, from the frequent use made of them by the distributors of news and politics.

Class 1.—*General Information.*

Under this head we include the larger and most important portion of the paper. Even whole leading articles might be kept ready made-up, and used again after a certain lapse of time; for if anybody will take the trouble to look at the journals of fifty years back, he will find that the editors' ideas were precisely similar to those of the present day. Approaching ruin of the country; distress of the labouring classes; the instability of the ministry, and their sure defeat in a short period; certain gain which will accrue to their own (the newspaper's) party by a dissolution and fresh election; ingenious turning of a palpable minority into a glorious victory; with vituperation, flattery, rumours

of bad and good, laments and exultation,—are profusely scattered through the article. The usual information we would have cast in solid pieces, as follows:—

Had there been the least wind, the whole of the street would have fallen a prey to the devouring element.

From inquiries made by our reporter yesterday relative to the property destroyed, it would appear that the amount of the loss had been much exaggerated.

The jury proceeded to view the bodies, which presented a horrid spectacle, being literally burnt to a cinder.

The children marched round the room after dinner, and their clean healthy appearance was the subject of general commendation.

We have received the French papers of Tuesday, but they contain little additional interest. The following appeared in part of our edition of yesterday.

She was immediately taken to the Middlesex Hospital, where the injury was pronounced to be of a dangerous nature.

(The words *cab*, *crossing*, *elderly woman*, *concussion*, and *Oxford-street*, may each be advantageously cast in one piece for this paragraph.)

Class 2.—*Advertisements.*

This part of the journal, of course, admits of infinite changes: but the following pieces may be found useful:—

This ship presents a splendid opportunity for passengers, and carries an experienced surgeon. For freight or passage, apply to the commander on board, or at the Jerusalem Coffee-house.

H. M. is implored to return immediately, or write to his family. He may rest assured that everything will be arranged to his satisfaction.

Douceur,—500*l.* will be given to any person who can present the advertiser with a permanent situation, which will yield an income of not less than 500*l.* a-year. The strictest honour and secresy may be relied on.

A widow lady is anxious for an engagement to superintend the household of a single gentleman, or a widower without children.

To the Heads of Ladies' Schools.—The friends of a young lady are desirous of placing her in a first-rate establishment, where the devotion of one part of her time to the pupils would be considered equivalent to receiving lessons in French, German, Italian, and music, during the other.

Class 3.—*Answers to Correspondents.*

(More especially addressed to the Sunday Papers.)

Madame Vestris is not yet forty-six.

St. Paul's is higher than the Monument.

A. bets B. that it is nearer twelve than one. On

referring to the clock, it is ten minutes to one. Which wins? A. is an ass.

We do not recollect Mr. Keeley's performance of *Hamlet*. Mr. Macready never played the *Bottle Imp*.

Prince Albert is not an Englishman.

We really cannot tell who is my Lord Melbourne's brewer. We advise A. to inquire at his lordship's residence.

C. D. Yes.

Boulogne is in France.

The pit of Covent-garden is bigger than that of Drury-lane.

The statement of B. "that the only good resulting from steeple chases is, that they sometimes get rid of a fool," is both false and unsportsmanlike. He is not, however, actionable for saying so, nor is it a proof of his insanity.

We really cannot tell how many people pass through the southern arch of Temple Bar during the day. We advise "A Constant Reader" to post himself there and count them. He can refresh himself with baked apples from the stall at the edge of the pavement.

Musicus.—You win. There is an instrument fashioned and painted like a serpent in the musician's at the corner of Craig's-court, Charing Cross.

Mr. Dickens did not write *Jack Sheppard*. It is the production of Mr. Ainsworth, who is not the author of the Latin Dictionary bearing his name.

We are not aware how it occurs that false fronts and yellow turbans are so prevalent in a boarding-house at a guinea and a half a-week. We do not think it fair to dub such a house "The Old Curiosity Shop."

SPECULATIONS ON MARRIAGE AND YOUNG LADIES.

"I do much wonder, that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love."—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

It was for nurturing these, and other similar sentiments, that we always felt a greater degree of affection

for Benedick than any other of Shakspeare's characters: his opinions accorded exactly with our own. We only regret that he so lost himself towards the termination of the play as to venture his happiness in the very bark he had sworn to mistrust. But he was deceived into taking this step, as well as Beatrice; and, if they had not crouched about in summer-houses, playing the eaves-droppers to intentional discourses, we wager a case of Houbigant's best gloves that they would both have died single.

It is no proof that Benedick became a firm convert to matrimony, because he danced on his wedding-day, and wrote a sonnet to the lady of his love. The comedy ends, where all other merriment does, with marriage; and leaves us to form our own opinions as to whether the various couples, in the words of the old nursery tales, lived happy together all the rest of their lives, to a good old age. We only regret for the sake of holding up a mirror to society in general, and match-makers in particular, that the great dramatist did not add a sequel, and lay the period of the action, in the theatrical taste of the day, five years after his former production.

A high moral feeling has alone kept us, up to the present moment, from taking the fatal leap; and yet, with all our anti-matrimonial propensities, there is not a more fervent admirer of the *beau sexe* on the face of the civilized earth. We never went to an evening party in our life but we returned home madly, deeply, desperately in love,—not the calm, calculating attachment of a formal courtship, but that all-absorbing pas-

sion of four-and-twenty hours' duration, which only the powerful auxiliaries of champagne, chandeliers, and *cornets-à-pistons* can produce.

Of course, everything must have a beginning, except rings, chaos, and Adelphi overtures, and, *par consequence*, everybody has a first love—a hobbledehoy kind of an attachment, all letters and locks of hair. Foolish people, who speak a little French, will tell you "*on revient toujours à ses premiers amours!*" This we deny. We, ourselves, once had a first love, and a very pretty one too, but it was a long while ago. She made us a watch-guard of her own hair, and in return we gave her a kiss and a carved ivory buckle which we bought at Boulogne for ten francs, and we supposed ourselves engaged, and wrote little notes all about nothing to each other every day. Gradually, however, the notes got shorter, and their transmission at longer intervals apart, and we finally "declared off" by a tacit agreement, and found out fresh flames. We did not see her for eight or ten years, and then we heard that she was married. We met a short time since with as reserved a greeting as if nothing had ever passed between us, and we began to ask ourselves what we could have found so bewitching in her. Indeed we were almost sorry for the rencontre; for when we have not seen any object we once felt an interest in, for a long period, we only picture them as we knew them at the time of parting; and in this case we thought the visionary recollections we retained of the smiling sylph-like girl of nineteen far preferable to the substantial reality of the matron-approaching woman of thirty.

As for clothing a first-love with all that halo of undying recollection, and occasional yearning returns of old feelings, which is common in album poetry, it is all nonsense. From eighteen to twenty-two, the usual period of a first-love, our ideas of future prospects and compatibility of disposition are rather vague and indefinite. We fall in love, and form plans of marriage under the conviction that our whole life is to be a succession of Kensington promenades, Zoological Sundays, and Hanover Square Room balls. We are, moreover, at this period, intensely susceptible,—our rough nature is the sand-paper upon which the match readily takes light, and it endures in a similar manner to the combustion of a congreve, being very fierce, and of short existence. If extinguished suddenly, by throwing cold water upon it, of course there is a hiss and a sputter; but, if allowed to wear itself out—an admirable plan in all first attachments—it declines as gradually and silently as a fumigating pastille.

If a bachelor escapes being booked until he is five or six years after age, the chances are that he will remain single some time longer. He looks upon marriage with a more serious regard, and begins to think the same face *might* tire, however lovely its aspect, if he had nothing else to gaze at "from morn till dewy eve." He sees friends of his own age, who have married for love, or were too impatient to wait for an income, beginning to grumble at each other, and their increasing expenditure. This rather frightens him, and induces him to think it is best to be free, after all.

There is nothing in the world so agreeable as flirt-

ing, and we look upon a downright earnest flirt as a creation of the first order. There is no trap laid here, —no calculation in her few hours' attachment,—it is all the warm-hearted emanation of an affectionate disposition. She does not wonder what your income is, or whether you have any expectations *in futuro*, but prefers you, for the evening, to the best match of the season. And, provided you meet her on her own ground, and with her own weapons, and there are no unpleasant friends to ask your "intentions," if you carry your philandering too far, you may enumerate in your life-time some of the brightest moments allotted to man; only dimmed, to be sure, by the wound your vanity experiences when she cuts you in her caprice, and transfers her love to another quarter.

Generally speaking, a *célibataire* is pretty safe when talking nonsense to a professed flirt; but if he has not a matrimonial disposition, and persists in laughing at love, he should beware of boarding-houses as he would of hydrophobia, and more especially at the watering-places; for they are a regular system of bachelor traps, always set and baited with every kind of feminine variety:—aged seventy-fours, almost laid up in dock, who occasionally act as guard-ships to the establishment; fast-sailing privateers, who sometimes hoist the black flag, under the garb of widows; and tight-built yachts, with a good figurehead and clean run, in the shape of *demoiselles à marier*, forming in their *ensemble* an attractive maelstrom, which it requires some pilotage to escape. These are all dangerous craft to fall in with, especially the last; for if people choose

to leave the comfort of their homes for the *ennui* of a sea-side town, it is evident that every plan must be resorted to for killing the time as quickly as possible, which they have so long anticipated. The young people get thrown together; they gamble for crockery ink-stands, *bouquet de la Reine*, and German-silver butter-knives, at the library sweepstakes, receiving a certain half-crown's worth of value for the six shillings which fill the raffle; they contemplate the ocean, and its adopted children, the bathers, on the sands; they walk together on the pier to see the steamers arrive and depart, or join parties of pleasure to every place not worth seeing in the neighbourhood; and finally, whilst strolling together one fine evening upon the cliffs, they are overcome by the influence of the moon, from time immemorial the patroness of lunatics, and propose. This is no rare history: we should like to call the attention of the Statistical Society to a return of the number of matches which have sprung from the casual intimacy of a sea-side boarding-house.

Possibly a leading reason which inclines us to the determination of dying an old bachelor is, that there is little doubt of marriage gradually becoming an acknowledged mercantile transaction. We think, before long, the state of the hymeneal markets will be chronicled in the newspapers, in common with the other commercial affairs of the day, which our "nation of shopkeepers" feel such delight in perusing. The chief marts will be the ball rooms and public resorts of the metropolis, together with the fashionable provincial towns. We shall read that at the Horticultural Fête the demand

for young ladies was brisk, and that dark eyes and chestnut hair went off at good prices; that at Ascot Races little business was transacted, but that, upon adjourning to Lady F——'s *soirée*, (a sort of Tortoni's, whereat to carry on business after the great Bourse had closed,) the exchange of hearts rose higher than it had been all day. Assurance societies will be established against the chance of dying a spinster, with the most approved match-making *chaperons* for directors, and a capital of twenty thousand bachelors; and possibly a price-current will be published of most of the young men about town.

But we think we have said enough. We could produce more arguments in favour of our opinions, but we are fearful of irritating the young ladies, and upon our next entrance into society encountering the same fate from their hands which Orpheus met with from the Thracian women. One word more, and we have finished. We are never too old to repent, and possibly we might some day see reasons to change our sentiments, for we should not like to be thought obstinately self-opinionated. And if there is any pretty Beatrice who might like to try the experiment of converting us to matrimony, we are not above conviction, and we give her leave to make the attempt.

A VISIT TO GREENWICH FAIR.

On Tuesday evening, March 29, 1842, Messrs. Mills, Barlow, and Saunders, three "medical young gentlemen," who, although they have passed their examinations, bear in mind the advice of a celebrated teacher, and "do not cease to consider themselves as students," or behave accordingly, honoured Greenwich fair with their presence.

The appointed trysting-place, previously to starting for the festive scene, was the Cheshire Cheese, in Wine-office Court, Fleet Street; an establishment which, in the scale of architectural creation, forms the link between the coffee-room and the menagerie, possessing the viands and waiters of the one, and the sawdust and feeding-time of the other. Having ordered various "muttons to follow," which, in the *patois* of this part of the world, is understood to mean consecutive chops, Mr. Barlow confidentially informed his friends, that the punch brewed at this house was rather extensive; whereupon, divers tumblers were perpetrated, and, overcome either by the seductive beverage, or the bright eyes of the young lady who manufactured it, the three gentlemen indulged in divers facetious pastimes, to the great amusement of the rest

of the company; finally, with the assistance of a burnt cork, converting the end of one of the boxes into the following singularly felicitous design: —

At half-past eight P.M. the party left Wine-office Court in a state of exceeding hilarity; and, observing a cab standing opposite the Bolt-in-Tun, stepped into it forthwith, but, on finding that it was waiting for a passenger, immediately stepped out again. Another like vehicle, however, coming by, they lost no time in engaging it, and, making a bargain for eighteenpence, told the driver to go in a similar manner to bricks, to the Surrey side of London Bridge. On their journey thither they indulged in various shouts, yells, and whistles, Mr. Mills, in particular, thrusting his head and shoulders out of the window, facetiously exclaim-

ing to the passengers, "Here we are again! How are you?" after the manner of the celebrated Mr. T. Mathews. Mr. Barlow contented himself by sitting very back, and chaunting a *mélange* from Norma, interspersed with airs from the Cyder Cellars; and Mr. Saunders amputated the tassel of one of the glasses, throwing it into the open window of the first omnibus that passed, which, in all probability, conveyed it to Brentford End.

They arrived at the terminus of the Greenwich Railway just in time to take their seats in one of the rattling boxes denominated by courtesy, second-class carriages, which, upon payment of sixpence each, they were permitted to enter. In two minutes the train moved on, and they were much edified by the continuous brick-fields and gas-manufactories, whose localities they invaded, pronouncing the rapid dioramas of sectional habitations and domestic interiors which met their view, exceedingly interesting. The engine became a locomotive Asmodeus, hurrying them from roof to roof in quick succession, placing them on terms of close intimacy with the garret-windows, revealing endless bird's-eye views of chimney-pots, back-yards, and water-butts, and causing the passengers of reflective minds to meditate upon the accumulation of poverty and pig-sties that exist in the metropolis, unknown to the inhabitants in general, and West-enders in particular.

The progress of the train was not so rapid as might have been expected; this Mr. Barlow attributed to the use of the simple fluid in the boiler instead of gin-and-

water, which, he informed a lady near him, was always laid on at fair-time. At Deptford Creek the engine stopped altogether, and remained stationary for at least ten minutes. Messrs. Mills and Saunders, having in vain attempted, by shouting and screaming, to arouse the stoker to a sense of his duty, commenced the inspiring national air of "Rule Britannia," or rather, the words newly arranged, at the very top of their voices, in which they were joined by the whole strength of the rest of the passengers. By these means the popular indignation was audibly expressed, and the train at length moved on, arriving at the terminus at half-past nine.

Having fixed upon a stellated arrangement of variegated lights to serve as a species of pole-star, in case they should be separated by the crowd, our three companions plunged, like so many Miltons, into the midst of things. Around them was a dense mass of human beings; on either side a row of richly-furnished booths, groaning with toys and gingerbread; above them, lights innumerable; beneath them, an expanse of mud and rough granite; before them, the imposing exterior of the shows; and behind them, the things they had passed. The remote thunder of trumpets and drums, mingled with the nearer harmony of Æolian pears, and the cries, laughter, and chiding of the festive throng, smote, with deafening confusion, on the ears.

Their first step was to halt at one of the stalls, where each purchased a small penny cornet without the pistons, and a curious little instrument, which it appears actually incumbent upon everybody to possess

who wishes to take up an important position at Greenwich Fair. This diverting and ingenious piece of mechanism is principally formed by a stellated disc of wood, one inch in diameter by three-eighths in thickness. A small spring of wood is attached to the frame-work by a metal pin termed a tack, and as the wheel is turned by friction against any extraneous body the spring falls from one vandyke to another, producing, by the rapid succession of atmospheric concussions, a noise resembling the laceration of a garment. Thus armed, they proceeded onwards, promoting, by their musical instruments, the harmony of the delightful scene; and, after much jostling, and bandying of various uncomplimentary expressions with the crowd, arrived in front of the principal show, which merits especial notice.

The precise date of erection of Richardson's (or more properly, Lee and Johnson's) theatre has not been correctly ascertained; but it is presumed that the first pole was pitched on the Friday night previous to the fair. It is an elegant structure of baize and canvass, brilliantly illuminated by variegated lamps and pipkins of fat, and enriched, in addition, by red serge draperies, embroidered with brass ornaments, fashioned similarly to those which cover the screws of four-post bedsteads. The performances of this theatre are strictly illegitimate, yet bear a close analogy to the "moralities" of olden time, inasmuch as the best part takes place outside of the platform of the cart; or approaching, perhaps, nearer to the "mysteries" of the middle ages, from the perfect unintelligibility of the

plots, which would defy the united efforts of Mr. Payne Collier, and the whole of the Shakspeare Society, to render them comprehensible.

On ascending the platform, the three young gentlemen stopped to gaze at an intricate dance performed by the whole of the company, which they accompanied on their trumpets. At its conclusion, Mr. Mills asked the clown "how he felt upon the whole?" and the clown replied by wishing to know what Mr. Mills was going to stand. On paying sixpence, they were admitted to the gallery; but the accommodation of this part of the house not being to their satisfaction, they at once climbed over the barrier into the boxes, divers others of the gentlemen present following their example.

The first play occupied exactly ten minutes. It contained one ghost, two murders, and three combats, and represented Innocence, though for a time oppressed, ultimately triumphant over guilt; a consummation which, Mr. Barlow observed, must be highly gratifying to every well-regulated mind. The proportion of the actors to the height of the stage was exceedingly fine; so was their delivery; only equalled by the interpolations of the audience, which may be described as follows:—

SCENE—*The Hall of Judgment.*

Tyrant Lord.—Now, mitheruble athathin, what have you to thay for yourthelf?

Mr. Barlow (in the style of Herr Von Joel).—Va-ri-e-ty!

Oppressed peasant.—That I am innocent as the mountain-snow.

Gentleman in the gallery.—Oh! Walker!

Second Gentleman.—Order!

(*Obligato of trumpets and musical fruit by the audience.*)

Tyrant Lord.—You are guilty. Thummonth the headthman.

Popular indignation of spectators.—Shame! shame! —*Po*lice!—Never mind, little un—at him agin!

Tyrant Lord.—Away!—hith life ith forfeit.

Wag in the pit.—What 'll you take for your boots barring the heels?

And so on to the fall of the curtain.

A comic song served as an overture to the pantomime, which was an abridgment of "Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree," lately performed at the Olympic Theatre. The jokes therein were two in number. One consisted in the sudden abstraction, by invisible agency, of a wickerwork plum-pudding from the hands of the Clown, who, thereupon, entitled it a hasty-pudding; the other, which was simply practical, in the Clown's stealing a string of sausages, manufactured from painted canvass stuffed with sawdust, and then dashing them into the Pantaloon's face. The last scene was an adjournment to "Fairy Land," that locality being represented by the interior of a large summer-house, with the assembling of the company, and the additional presence of two young ladies in pink calico tunics, who had previously retailed peppermint and apples to the company. At the conclusion, the audience were thanked in the name of the proprietors, and then let out at a side-door, a fresh rush immediately filling the theatre.

Messrs. Saunders, Barlow, and Mills next proceeded to view the equestrianism at the "Royal Circus." The chandelier which lighted the interior was ingeniously formed of concentric iron hoops one over the other, supporting several very adipose candles, which the

Merryman occasionally snuffed with his fingers in a humorous and diverting manner. The exhibition commenced with the display of the Terpsichorean powers of a young lady on the tight rope, which stretched across the arena—a ring of sawdust, ornamented with orange-peel. She was ten years of age, and splendidly dressed in a coloured calico frock, with a faded cotton-velvet body, ornamented with lines of dull spangles and tarnished silver-lace, with whity-brown holland slippers. After this, they were gratified by the "grand *entrée* of the stud,"—a piebald mare, inclined to corpulency, led in by two grooms in fus-

tian waistcoats and ankle-jacks. The young lady now danced upon horseback, assuming a graceful attitude and pleasing *stereotypical* smile. Before this act concluded, Mr. Saunders and his friends departed, per-

fectly satisfied with what they had seen, and also with what they had not, but which they could very well imagine. Here also the Clown's jokes were of the dual number. After having chalked the slippers of the young lady, he proceeded to do the same to his own nose, and, subsequently, to the soles of his shoes, "because he had slipped into a public house the night before, and into the gutter afterwards, and did not wish to do it again." Also, when assaulted by the Mr. Widdicomb of the ring, he hauled that person in front of the piebald steed, and then professed himself quite satisfied, having brought him before the *mare*. (The reader is here humbly solicited to laugh, merely as a personal favour.) The impression left on the minds of the young gentlemen upon leaving was, that they had enjoyed a very rational—at any rate a very reasonable—entertainment. The price of admission, as stated outside, was sixpence to the boxes, and threepence to the gallery; but these distinctions proved, upon going inside, perfectly apocryphal.

The observing trio then proceeded to the next show, to view the fat pig, with other wonders, therein to be seen by all who could command one penny. They discovered the monster reclining on a bed of straw, and grunting piteously under his too, too solid fat. When the showman had violently thrust twenty people into a space capable of accommodating four or five, the keeper delivered the following lecture upon the pig, and the other two curiosities which composed the exhibition. It should be stated that the man appeared to be suffering from influenza.

" Geltelbel ald ladies,

" The hadibal that you there be-old beasures tel feet three ilches frob the slout to the tail. The daily qualtity of food which he colsubes is wul peck of potatoes, ald wul shillil's wuth of bread. I shall low bake hib get up, ald you will thel have al opportulity hof seeil' hib to advaltage."

So saying, he stirred the monster up with a switch, to his no small annoyance. The brute, after standing in the worst possible of humours for about two minutes, began to incline itself on its right side, until, at length, having forced its bulk over the centre of gravity, it fell at full length, with a weight that threatened to bring the whole machine down.

" The hadibal," continued the keeper, " that you see suspelded there, is a calf, borl with two eds ald two tails. That other curiosity, ladies ald geltelbel, is called the porcupile fish, from beil covered, has you observe, all over with prickles; ald was vashed ashore ob the coast ov Buckilghabshire. Geltelbel ald ladies, a trifle, hif you please, for the showbal."

Emerging from the den of this extraordinary lion (*videlicet* pig), our three adventurers, forcing their way through a crowd of living obstacles, to the provocation of remonstrances more warm than affectionate, and of salutations less polite than playful, bore—or, rather bored,—in the direction of another menagerie, of which the embellished exterior attracted their attention. The principal curiosities which the exhibition contained, appeared from the pictorial advertisement outside, to be not very dissimilar to those they

had just witnessed,—one of them being, literally, a member of the *sus scrofa* family, and the other an animal in many respects closely allied to it, but, from being a biped, and having some pretensions to the feminine cast of countenance, denominated "The fat girl."

A whole-length portrait, that graced the front of the exhibition, represented the young lady as she was supposed to appear inside. The drapery of the figure was somewhat scanty, and free from the slightest affectation of harmony in the arrangement of the colours. It was evident that the artist had sacrificed grace to effect;

his object having been to afford as full a display of the unadorned beauties of the neck, arms, and ankles, as he possibly could. On the right of the corpulent fair-one (the picture was a full front) stood, arrayed in the costume of the commencement of the present century, a lady, in a short-waisted dress, with a red parasol: on the left, a gentleman in a blue coat, brass buttons, leather breeches, and top-boots; both personages in profile, and exhibiting animated gestures of astonishment. This *chef-d'œuvre* of anonymous art was flanked by two other productions, apparently by the same hand; one being a delineation of "Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimeras dire," with other serpentine monstrosities; and, the other, the interesting and learned pig, in a mystic circle of cards, letters, and points of the compass.

The students having, by the sacrifice of a small piece of money, obtained admission into the *penetralia* of the caravan, found themselves in the presence of two or three small boys, and the sagacious animal himself; who, with the instinct peculiar to his species, was hunting for eatables all about the place, and testifying, by various grunts, his dissatisfaction at not finding any. At the further end of this cabinet of curiosities, which in length might be equalled by an ordinary man's jump, and in breadth by, perhaps, three skips of a flea of average power, was a species of *sanctum*, apparently formed of bed-furniture and fringe, and adapted, as it were, for the residence of some zoological curiosity. Presently a hand appeared,

which drew the two portions together, and then the concussion, as of a heavy body relapsing into a state of quiescence, left no doubt on the minds of the spectators that the inmate of this seclusion was the fat girl. In a few minutes the show having filled to a degree that rendered it necessary to open a small trap-door in the roof, the exhibition commenced.

"Fust, gen'l'men and ladies," said the demonstrator, in that peculiar tone which frequent catarrhal diseases, and the constant use of alcoholic remedies, combine to produce,—"fust, we shall hintroduce to yer notice that wonderful nacheral curiosity of the female speech is, the fat girl. For yer satisfacshun she 'll walk athert the caravan, and back agin, so as you may see there 's no himposition in the case."

Herewith, the fair phenomenon, parting the curtain to the right and left, emerged from her bower, and walked twice up and down the middle of the show, endeavouring as she went to shake the frail tenement with her tread. The truth was, that the affair slightly approached to what Mr. Saunders denominated "a take in,"—Mr. Mills, "his eye," and Mr. Barlow, "a jolly sell;" all of them agreeing that they had seen several nurses who were twice as fat; but, that a certain young lady, not half her age—the fat *girl* was, at least, fifty,—daily on view in a particular tobacco-shop, was, certainly, twice her size. They allowed that the plume of white feathers in her hair, the *bandeau* on her forehead, the spangled dress, and the short sleeves and petticoats, had been correctly

delineated outside the show; but that the portrait of the fat girl, on the whole, and particularly as regarded expression, was "a decided case" of flattery.

The female having retired, the other animal became the observed of all observers. He performed three feats, each requiring (for a pig) an amazing exertion of intellect. He was first desired by his master to declare which among the male individuals present might be at that present moment in love, by stopping opposite to him in his circuit. Mr. Saunders denominated this performance "a jib," as he stopped before a little boy of six years' old, who was munching an apple, which had probably attracted him. A kick in the stomach, administered by his master, re-

called him to a sense of his obligations, and he straightway pitched upon Mr. Barlow, at which three young ladies in the show laughed amazingly. His next task was to point out the young woman present whom the tender passion deprived of rest at night, and caused, by the febrile excitement which it induced, to kick off the superincumbent drapery. This he achieved so well as to excite universal applause; and, as the damsel indicated was about twenty, it is probable, on statistical grounds, that he was right. And, lastly, he was desired to tell who was the greatest rogue in the company; and decided in favour of his master—a conclusion which nobody doubted.

After the hierophant of the caravan had exhibited some snakes, he thanked the audience; and the illustrious triad bent their steps towards the point, *par excellence*, of attraction—the Crown and Anchor Booth. To render the company of this establishment slightly exclusive and select, the sum of one shilling was demanded for entrance. Messrs. Saunders and Barlow, by means of recommendations, in the shape of return-tickets, which they obtained from two of its lady-patronesses, who were taking their leave for the evening, effected their entrance without paying; as, also, did Mr. Mills, who stooped down, and butted, head first, through the crowd at the wicket.

In order to adequately describe the scene presented by the interior of this splendid booth, or the feelings which it excited, no pen less gifted than that of the talented auctioneer, who can raise even rubbish to

rarities, could aspire. All was music, light, and tobacco; and the crowd, but for the hilarity which pervaded it, would have been awful. Stars, festoons, balloons, Vs and As, crowns, and other fanciful arrangement of variegated lamps depended from the ceiling, producing a singular empyreumatic odour,—strong, certainly, yet to those who liked it, pleasant. On a raised and curiously-unsafe platform were seated some musicians of untiring energy; and several hundred couples were performing the Spanish dance below. The dancers were mostly of opposite sexes; but, amongst them were several individuals of that class of society so well known as "gents," who, out of sheer devotion to Bacchus and Terpsichore, were exhibiting the poetry of motion in partnership. Two of these "gents," impinging somewhat violently against Mr. Saunders, he was about to perform an operation on them, which Dr. Conquest has tried for water on the brain, *viz.* "punching the head," and was only deterred by the thought that black eyes look rakish at *demonstration* in the morning.

Our friends, now making the circuit of this scene of innocent festivity, joined a procession of bacchanals, male and female, headed by a Comus in cloth boots and a fifteen-shilling Taglioni, and parading, after the manner of the ancients, to the sound of musical instruments—trumpets, whistles, horns, and drums. As the procession generally chose for its line the centre of the Spanish dance whilst it was in full play, many serious concussions took place; so, fearing an *émeute*,

the trio left the jovial band, and wandered awhile "at their own sweet will," among the crowd, interchanging greetings with some whom they knew, and with a great many more whom they knew not. At last, pronouncing the atmosphere too full of carbonic acid for wholesome respiration; or, as Mr. Barlow said, "so full of smoke, that he should cut it;" and somewhat inclining to the celebrated "hospital Medoc," commonly known as "half-and-half," they determined to leave the booth. But, not exactly approving of the exclusive principle on which the arrangements were conducted, they took checks, and gave them to the most disreputable persons they could find.

As they returned into town they observed an erection, which reminded them of the pictures of Noah's ark. It was nearly sixty feet long, and contained, they were informed, a live whale. Agreeing that whatever was to be seen there was, no doubt, very like one, they proceeded, without entering, on their way; and happening to see some shrimps, invitingly displayed in a window, amongst other luxuries, they rushed upstairs, guided by a board in the shop, on which was inscribed "Supper Rooms," and entered the first-floor front. They were rather dismayed at finding they had entered a temperance coffee-house, where nothing was kept but coffee and ginger-beer; but, having prevailed upon the landlady to send out for two pots of the favourite beverage, they ordered some of the aforesaid *crustacea*, and commenced a

bacchanalian song, in which Mr. Barlow accused himself of having forsaken an imaginary young lady, named Phillis, to whom he was supposed to be paying his addresses, and stuck to his glass; ending with an enumeration of the comforts found in wine.

When this had concluded, to the great joy of the assembled teetotallers, Mr. Mills got out of the window upon the ledge of the shop-front, and amused himself by addressing the crowd on the subject of the income-tax, strangely mixing it up with divers snatches of anatomy and popular metaphysics. His harangue was received with loud shouts, and showers of orange-peel; but fearing lest two or three policemen should be added to the number of his hearers, and finding that the shrimps and half-and-half had arrived, after a few minutes' oratory, the honourable gentleman sat down—to supper.

The social meal having been despatched, our three adventurers returned to town. They went back as they came—by the train; and yelled, shouted, and screamed, with all their might, to the apparent delight of the generality of their fellow-passengers; but to the scandalization of a small minority, in the person of a serious-looking young man, who inquired whether they considered themselves gentlemen; to which question they replied, that they certainly did not,—thus stopping all further argument.

We will not follow their revelries further. It will suffice to say that, on returning to their respective lodgings—at what precise time is not known, but it

is presumed to have been at a very early hour,—each, as he laid his head upon his pillow, exulted in that delightful consciousness, which it is the exclusive privilege of the aspiring mind to feel, of having "done it rather."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.